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STANLEY THORN.

BY

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AUTHOR OF "VALENTINE VOX, THE VENTRILOQUIST," &c.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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STANLEY THORN.

CHAPTER I.

BOB MAKES A DISCOVERY WHICH IS CALCULATED
TO BE HIGHLY ADVANTAGEOUS.

As it has been already placed on record that, in consequence of Stanley's departure from the park before the friends of the lady whom he had rescued had time to express their gratitude, Bob felt that he had been, to a sensible extent, victimized, it may now without any impropriety be stated that, as he could not suppress this purely natural feeling, he had been ever since looking out for the old groom with unparalleled sharpness and zeal. His expectation of meeting with that ancient individual had

been particularly lively and strong ; his object being to impart to the friends of that lady through him the fact that Stanley was the person by whom the gallant action was performed ; for, being a pure and faithful servant, he held it to be a pity that they should remain in utter ignorance of him who was so justly and so eminently entitled to their thanks.

He had, however, been signally unsuccessful in his search. He had described with artistical fervour the chief characteristics of the animated piece of antiquity in question to every gentleman with whom he had the honour of being acquainted ; but, as they were unable to give him any specific clue to the discovery of the ancient, he felt quite at a loss ; for he did not conceive it to be strictly correct to advertise him in the *Hue and Cry*, or, indeed, in any of the public papers, although he would with much willingness have offered a reward of five shillings for his apprehension, to be paid on conviction of his being the same man.

Notwithstanding he had been grievously disappointed in spirit in divers instances in which he had made sure of having the honour to run

him down, Bob nobly scorned to give the thing up: he felt perfectly certain that he should have the pleasure of meeting the old gentleman at some period somewhere; and to show the rather extraordinary correctness of this conjecture, it will be necessary to explain that immediately after Stanley and Amelia had started to meet Sir William at the widow's, he miraculously beheld, as he was walking down Regent Street to have an hour's confidential conversation with a friend, the identical individual on horseback, behind a lady who really looked very much indeed like the one who had been so providentially preserved.

In an instant Bob knew him. He could not be mistaken. He could have sworn conscientiously to his being the same man. But then, what was he to do? They were trotting rather briskly; and the proximity of the groom to his mistress was so remarkable that he really could not speak to him then with any degree of convenience. He could therefore pursue but one course, and that course he did pursue. He started off with the inflexible determination not to lose sight of

them, seeing that he felt at least *two* sovereigns all but in his pocket. He had not the smallest doubt that they resided in May-Fair, or its immediate vicinity; and, as they turned up Piccadilly, he darted after them with joy, although he found it excessively hot. They passed Bond-Street and Sackville Street,—which, of course, was just what he expected; but then they dashed up to the Park,—which did by no means meet his views; and he could not avoid expressing privately to himself an innocent wish that it had been otherwise. There was, however, no help for it, although it was very sultry. He still kept on, resolved not to be beaten; but it cannot be denied that he found the perspiration becoming unpleasantly profuse. It is, however, the spirit which sustains a man under circumstances of an adverse character: it is that which enables him to overcome difficulties, under which he would else of necessity sink. Bob highly appreciated this profoundly philosophical fact; and hence would not permit his manly spirit to flag. Still he thought it very hard, for he felt very warm and uncomfortable as the con-

viction flashed vividly across his brain, that, instead of the lady being on her way home, as he had fondly conceived, she had in reality but just come out; and, when he took into calm consideration the character of ladies in the aggregate, he thought it extremely probable that Heaven only knew when she meant to return. He, notwithstanding all this, disdained to lose sight of her; he still kept on running; and, as he ran, a variety of ideas kept darting into his head and darting out again. There was, however, one which made a short stay, and this was, that if he went back to the gate he should be just as secure as if he ran round the ring. But then, he asked himself how he could, in the nature of things, tell that she would not go out at one of the other gates? This was a question to which he could give no satisfactory answer; and, as at the moment the ghosts of two sovereigns, as if to warn him, flitted grimly before his imagination, he felt strongly that it would not do at all to leave anything to chance, although he had a horrid notion that he should not be able to keep the game alive much longer, seeing that

he actually did feel as nearly as possible exhausted.

Having passed Cumberland Gate, the lady, with great consideration, walked her horse, which Bob held to be a blessing, and was very thankful for it. It enabled him to recover his breath a little; when, perceiving that all was quite safe, he took a short cut back, still keeping his eyes fixed with surpassing firmness upon his object, and being prepared to dart after her if she offered to turn; but, happily for him, no such offer was made. Gracefully and deliberately she came along the drive, and at length passed into Piccadilly.

At this point Bob tried to attract the attention of the ancient groom, who happened to be a greater distance behind his mistress than usual; but that gentleman, being absorbed in his own private reflections, failed to notice him; a circumstance which Bob did not care much about; for, in the first place, he was not in a fit state to speak to any one having the slightest pretensions to respectability; in the second, he could not have held any lengthened conversation with him then; and in the third,

he imagined that there could not be two strictly rational opinions about his being able now to discover their residence with ease. Under these peculiar circumstances, therefore, he continued to follow them ; and, albeit from Park Lane to Burlington Arcade the lady caused him to run with great velocity, he was firmly determined that it never should be said after all that he gave in. From Burlington Arcade to the Circus they proceeded very coolly ; but they dashed off again up Regent Street, where several individuals of Bob's acquaintance turned to marvel what on earth it could be which caused him to run at such an ungentlemanly rate. He stopped not, however, to explain ; but kept on with great spirit until the lady cantered calmly over Oxford Street, at which point his heart sank within him.

"Is it possible," thought he, "that she is going to have a turn in the Regent's Park?"

As she passed Langham Church he held this to be very possible ; but, just as he was putting it to himself—first, whether he was able to hold out ; and, second, whether, if

even he had the ability, it was worth his while to do so, she stopped before a door, which was immediately opened by a porter, when with the necessary assistance she dismounted, and Bob felt revived. It was all safe, then; but he really felt dreadfully out of breath, and, therefore, instead of accosting his old friend at once, he followed him coolly to the stables.

“Whose servant is that, my little buffer?” he inquired of a boy who was cleaning a patent bit, and hissing at it like a young serpent.

“Vot Venerable Joe, in the next stable? Gene’l Johnsonses.”

“I’ll give you a ha’p’ney,” said Bob, “if you’ll tell him that a gentleman wants to see him at the tap when he’s done.”

The lad promised to do so, and took the reward, when Bob went to the tap, and proceeded to restore to some extent the respectability of his appearance.

Venerable Joe, when he heard that a gentleman wished to see him at the tap, did not suffer much time to elapse before he made his appearance. Had his presence been re-

quired at the General's residence, it is rational to suppose that he would not have been in quite so much haste; but the tap was a place which he specially favoured, having no tender wife in the hay-loft; no lovely little cherubs hanging over the bar to cry, "Mother! oh, look! father's going it again!" He was a man without incumbrance, a perfectly free man, and, therefore, the moment Bob's ambassador had explained the precise object of his mission, he slipped on his easy dress, and started off to obey the summons.

"Ah! my old Scoglivax! Well, and how are you?" cried Bob, as the ancient groom entered.

"Vy, middlin'," said Venerable Joe; "but you 've got the adwantage on me, railly."

"What, don't you remember my master the other day dragged off your missus, you know, off that horse?"

"Vell, I thought, some 'ow or other, I'd seen yer afore. Vell, 'ow are yer?"

"Oh! hearty. Come drink. But I say though, how did you manage to catch that there bolter?"

“The warmint! He voodn’t let me ketch ’im at all. He vorn’t brought back till the follerin’ mornin’, and then p’raps, he vorn’t in no state!”

“You went after him, of course?”

“In course I vent arter ’im; but, at my time o’ life, yer see, I allus takes things heasy; and so, ven I found I couldn’t ketch ’im, yer see I guv ’im up.”

“Well, sit down, and make yourself miserable.”

“Vait a bit. Von’t be a minute. I’ll jist git vun o’ them ’ere boys there to rub down my ’osses, and twist back ag’in in a instant.”

“Well,” said Bob to himself in strict confidence when Venerable Joe had departed, “of all the rum things in human nature, the principle of keeping on old files like that in a family is just about the rummest. Why don’t they superannuate the bucks? What are they good for? If a horse bolts away they can’t catch him. They’re just good-for-nothing; and yet they are sent to protect young ladies whose blessed little necks may be in danger a thousand times, without their even attempting to

do any good, because they will take things easy. Why don't they pension them off! That's my sentiments."

Venerable Joe soon returned; and when he did return he duly inquired of Bob how he felt himself by that time, which was very affectionate; and Bob made an appropriate reply, and then went to work in earnest.

"Well," said he, "that was a queer start, though; wasn't it, eh?"

"I believe yer," said Venerable Joe, "it just vos. Your gov'ner must a bin rayther a rummy un to 've cotcht that air warmint, 'cos he ain't no dirt."

"No, he's a decentish sort. But was your misses hurt at all?"

"Not a bit; but werry frightened. Ven she come round she vundered oo it vos. Says she, 'Joseph,' says she, 'd'yer know,' says she, 'that air genelman?'—'No, miss,' says I, 'I carn't say,' says I, 'I know oo he is; but I think,' says I, 'I've see'd 'im afore.' The old General, too, vos werry anxious about 'im; but I couldn't tell oo he vos, 'cos I didn't know."

“ My governor, you see, is such a bashful cove. I wanted him to stop ; but he cut away as if he was afeard of being thanked, which was not the thing exactly : but do you tell them that it was him. It’s a pity they shouldn’t know, for it really was very well done.”

Venerable Joe quite agreed with Bob, who gave him his master’s address, and thus laid the foundation. He then had the pot again replenished, and they became very friendly and very communicative, and entered into each other’s views, and conversed on various topics with great eloquence and point ; and, in the course of conversation, the ancient explained how many miles he once walked within the hour, how many runs he once scored in one innings, how many sparrows out of eleven he once killed from five traps, how many pins he got down nine times running at skittles, how many quoits he once rang out of a dozen ; with a full explanation of an infinite variety of equestrian manœuvres, which never could have been performed by any other man.

“ Well,” said Bob at length, “ and how do you stand for the Darby ?”

“Vy, I carn’t say as I’m in for much this ’ear, although I know the ’oss as is to do the trick as vell as his rider as is to ’ave a thousand pun’ note ven he vins.”

“Well, I don’t care much,” said Bob, “I’m all safe; but I shouldn’t mind standing a drop of anything you like to know that.”

“Vy, yer see, I don’t know that I can tell yer jist yet, yer see, vithout betraying confidence; and if I do that they’ll never tell me nothin’ ag’in; but I shall see yer ag’in, no doubt, werry soon, and you shall be the fust to ’ave the office. ’Ave you got a heavyish book thish ’ear?”

“Why, not a very heavy ’un,” replied Bob as he produced it. “I always bet wet. Dry bets are so troublesome to get in. Men don’t like to fork out dry money; and if you bore ’em, you know, it’s a delicate thing, besides, it looks so, when they don’t mind paying for what they have part of. I’ve got—let me see, I’ve got down forty glasses of brandy-and-water, six-and-twenty of rum-and-water, seventy-two fourpenn’orths of gin-and-water, thirty pots of ale, and eight-and-twenty ditto of half-and-

half; and, according to my reckoning, if one horse wins—and I'm quite nuts upon him—I shall win twenty glasses of brandy-and-water, sixteen fourpenn'orths, and twelve pots of ale; and if he loses, let it go how it may, I can't win less than six of brandy-and-water, ten of rum-and-water, fourpenn'orths, and eight pots of half-and-half."

"But, vether he vins or loses, the whole b'ilin' 's to come in."

"As a matter of course, every drain. Now I'm open to take seven to two against the favourite in anything."

"That don't suit my book," observed Venerable Joe. "I can bet five to two."

"Brandy-and-water?"

"No; aither fourpenn'orths or arf-an'-arf."

"Wait a bit," said Bob, who again consulted his book, while the ancient knitted his brows, and looked very mysterious. "Make it brandy-and-water, and I'll take you."

"Werry well, I don't care; but let me advise yer as a friend not to be too spicy upon the favourite. I on'y mean it, in course, as an 'int."



1840

The end of the world

“ Oh ! I’m safe enough. Let ’s see—General Johnsonses Joseph, five to two, brandy-and-water. That ’s all regular. Now let us see how I stand.”

Bob then proceeded to make up his book, and found himself still in a very fair position ; and when they had had another pot of half-and-half he took leave of his antique friend, again impressing upon his mind the implicit character of the faith he had in his promise that he would at once inform the General where Stanley was to be found, and the warm re-assurances of Venerable Joe made him happy.

“ The General,” thought he, “ is now certain to call ; and when he does call, of course he’ll inquire about me ; and, when I see him, I don’t see how he can make me a present of less than a sov., and the lady herself can’t stand less than another. So that it’s not on the whole a bad move by any means !”

Nor was it. As far as the calling of the General was concerned Bob’s conjecture was very correct, for the General did call the following morning, and Amelia was delighted to

see him. He was a friend of her father—a bosom friend; and, therefore, although Stanley was from home at the time, he sent his card up to her, in the full conviction that he was right, for the name of Thorn had been impressed upon his mind by the circumstance of its having been at Richmond made the subject of many bitter puns.

“My poor girl!” he cried, as Amelia approached him. “I hope you are well.”

“I thank you,” said Amelia, “quite well. Oh! I am so glad to see you. This is indeed kind.”

The General explained why he had called, and then shook his head mournfully.

“You would reprove me?” said Amelia.

“No, no, my poor girl! not you—not you; I blame him: but I shouldn’t have cared even for that if he had been a good fellow.”

“Good, General! What may you mean?”

“Sad dog!—sad dog!—sorry for you—very sorry.”

“As far as my Stanley is concerned, upon my word you need not be, for he is one of the kindest creatures that ever breathed.”

“ Silly girls !—silly girls ! it is just like you all. Why, I hear—but, no matter. I can but regret it.”

“ If you have heard,” said Amelia, “ anything at all unfavourable of him, you have heard that which is highly incorrect. They who state that he is not a dear, kind, good, affectionate soul, basely wrong him.”

“ Well—well,” said the General, again taking her hand ; “ but tell me, now, candidly,—I know you are all very anxious to conceal the faults of those whom you love,—but come, tell me—it may be better for you, my poor girl, in every way,—is he really, now, what you represent him to be ?”

“ He is, indeed,” replied Amelia fervently. “ Believe me he is kind—most kind.”

“ Then, by Heaven ! the Captain shall hold out no longer. I’ll make him come round. He shall do it.”

“ Oh, if you could induce dear papa to forgive us.”

“ He shall !” exclaimed the General. “ A man has no right to be severe without reason !”

“ I feel that I have given him great cause to

be severe; but do use your kind influence. Do, there's a dear soul! Pray—pray do assure him that his anger is now the only thing which renders our happiness imperfect. Do this, and I will bless you!”

“ Depend upon me, my dear girl. “ I’ll run down to-morrow. I’ll make him come round. I thought you had a mad, harum-scarum, rakish rascal for a husband, who delighted in making you wretched; instead of a fine, brave, high-spirited fellow, who, while he knows what is due to himself, can respect the best feelings of others. I know he’s a fine fellow. I’m sure of it. If he had not been, he couldn’t have saved my poor girl. I respect him. I admire him. Rely upon it, I’ll put matters right, down at Richmond.”

Amelia thanked him, and blessed him, and begged of him to give her dear love to her papa; and to implore in her name his forgiveness. All which the General promised most faithfully to do; and then left her in tears, which were not those of sorrow.

CHAPTER II.

IN WHICH A POINT OF SOME INTEREST IS ARGUED
AT RICHMOND.

WHEN Bob heard that General Johnson had called, his indignation was excessive. He was in the house at the very time, nay all the time the General was there; and therefore could not but express in the warmest terms his sense of the extremely ungentlemanlike conduct of his fellow-servant William, who knew that the most direct intimations had been given, that when the General called he desired to have the honour of letting him out. He was conscious of this, quite conscious; and yet, having taken up the General's card, and become thereby certain of its being the General, this slave of passion returned to the kitchen, in which Bob and the cook were refreshing themselves with cold chicken and short cakes, and never mentioned a single syllable having reference to the

General until he had actually departed! This Bob held to be a dereliction of principle, of a description so monstrous that it was with extreme difficulty that he withheld that degree of prompt chastisement to which he conceived the delinquent entitled. His philosophy, however, imparted strength to his forbearance, and eventually caused him to be content with administering a grave expostulation, to the justice of which the cook promptly subscribed; for that amiable person had an ardent affection for Bob,—an affection which manifested itself chiefly in this, that she reserved for him exclusively all those delicacies of which she knew him to be strikingly fond, which was a monopoly, a species of favouritism, of which William did by no means approve; for, as he had an ardent affection for the cook, it rendered him very uncomfortable. It is to this, and to this alone, that his highly reprehensible conduct on the occasion in question must be attributed. He was jealous—in the tenderest sense jealous; and, albeit the object of his love was extremely tyrannical, and treated him with every unlady-like indignity, when he saw her and Bob thus enjoying themselves with the short cakes and

chickens, the spirit of revenge took possession of his soul so securely, that it was with a feeling of intense satisfaction he announced, when the General had left, that the General had been. This feeling was, however, short-lived; for while the cook laboured zealously to prove to him how utterly unfit he was in consequence to be in any respectable kitchen, Bob was engaged in philosophically showing that his behaviour was beneath the true dignity of a man, which had a powerful effect.

Stanley no sooner returned than Amelia explained to him with feelings of delight that Miss Johnson was the lady whom he had rescued; that the General had called with a warm heart to thank him; and that he had promised to use his influence with the Captain in their favour; all which imparted great satisfaction to Stanley, who, however, felt more than he expressed.

"I wonder," said he, "how the General found me out."

"His servant, it appears, knew you."

"Well, I am glad that he has called, because, knowing the family it will be pleasant for you; and I appreciate his kindness in offering to

reason with your father; but rely upon it, Amelia, he will soon come round without the mediation of friends; and perhaps it would have been quite as well to let him in his own way get over his obstinacy."

"Nay, my love, do not use a term so harsh."

"Why, what other term can be so applicable? What but obstinacy is it?—sheer obstinacy?"

"Fie, Stanley! Remember he is my father!"

"Well, well, my good girl, I'll say no more.—Oh! by the by, Wormwell wants me to dine with him to-day. Will you give me leave to go?"

"Give you leave!" said Amelia, with a smile.

"Why, of course. I cannot presume to go without. I told him that you ruled me with a rod of iron, and that therefore your permission must first be obtained."

Amelia was rather pleased with this idea,—she thought it quite original,—and playfully said, that as such was the case, if he promised to be good, he might go, for which, of course, he felt grateful; and, well knowing how little it required to delight that gentle creature, ex-

pressed his gratitude with appropriate humility, and then summoned Bob, for the purpose of giving him instructions to take the horses down to Epsom in the morning.

With these instructions Bob, of course, was highly pleased ; and in the morning he accordingly started ; and at about the same time General Johnson set off with the view of performing his promise to Amelia. The General had in the interim formed his plan. When he proposed to himself the attainment of any object he would carry the point, if possible, by storm ; but being an excellent tactician, and knowing Captain Joliffe sufficiently well to know that with him his favourite mode of attack would not succeed, he had made up his mind to accomplish the thing by stratagem, although he preferred the storming principle much. He appeared to feel that his reputation was at stake in this matter ; and it was indeed one of his chief characteristics that whenever he undertook to perform a task for another, he felt more deeply mortified in the event of a failure than the person whom he generously intended to serve. It was hence that he had studied his course of proceeding in this case

so deliberately; and as the result of that study was to convince him that he must act with great caution upon the Captain's pride, he resolved to make it appear that he entertained the most friendly feelings towards Stanley, and to show that his noble spirit rendered him worthy not only of the affection of Amelia, but of general esteem and admiration, well knowing how powerfully men are influenced by the opinions of those who form the social circles in which they move, and how easily favourable prepossessions are thus created, and adverse prejudices destroyed.

On arriving at Richmond, the General was, as usual, received most cordially. The Captain insisted upon his dining with them, of course, and equally of course the General consented, but conversed upon none but ephemeral topics until they had dined, when he thought it correct to touch with care upon that point which he felt himself then more than ever bound to carry, and, therefore, much to the delight of Mrs. Joliffe, who indulged in occasional exclamations of joy, proceeded to relate all the circumstances connected with the perilous position of his daughter, taking care to paint the rescue in

colours the most attractive; and, having set the Captain in the right train of thought, and drawn tears from the eyes of his affectionate lady, he, with admirable tact, waved the subject until he and the Captain were alone, when it was with great caution resumed, but with much more confidence on the part of the General who saw that he had already made a favourable impression.

“What a pity it is,” said he, after a pause during which the Captain appeared to be lost in a reverie,—“what a pity it is you are not reconciled to that young man. I, of course, should be pleased if you were, as I am placed in rather an awkward position; for I candidly confess to you that there are, indeed, very few whom I esteem more highly than him; but, independently of that consideration, upon my honour I think that you have held out now quite long enough. I am aware that these fugitive marriages are very seldom productive of happiness; but I must say that, as there is now every prospect of this being an exception to the general rule, you will not act with wisdom if you treat them too harshly.”

“General, when I speak to you I speak not

only to a man of sense and judgment, but to one who is a father, and who possesses a father's feelings. I therefore, with confidence, put it to you how, under the self-same circumstances, would you have acted?"

"Doubtless, precisely as you have: nay, perhaps with a greater degree of harshness. I do not believe that I should have been quite so tranquil. But then, in our own cases, we appear to be incapable of forming a correct judgment. We ought not to act upon our own impulses alone; we ought to be guided by the calmer judgment of others; our own feelings are too warm, too acute, too one-sided, to allow us to do justice. If any young dog were to run away with my girl, I should rave, and storm, and threaten to blow out his brains, no doubt; but then, I should look upon any other man who raved, and stormed, and threatened, under similar circumstances, as being unwise! We, therefore, ought not to depend upon our own judgment in such a case as this. It is perfectly sure to be perverted. We ought, rather, to be guided by those who have the power to feel all that we feel, but whose judgment is not warped by the imme-

diate operation of those feelings. But, what are the chief points of that young man's character to which you object?"

"His youth, and inexperience: his utter want of that knowledge of the world which is so essential to the pursuit of a prosperous and strictly honourable course through it."

"Exactly: the very points to which I should object. My girl should not, with my consent, marry any man who had not sufficient experience to resist the temptations, and to ward off the dazzling *diablerie* of the vicious. But, what would you say to me if a young fellow without this experience were clandestinely to marry my girl, and I were to hold out, as you do, what would be your advice to *me*?"

"I should certainly advise you to hold out still, that he might feel that, as his wife had made a sacrifice of all for him, he was bound to cherish her with tenfold tenderness."

"Very good—very good. I should, then, think it excellent advice, and should follow it, no doubt; but, if I did, what besides should I be doing? Why, laying the foundation of the defeat of the very object I had in view: driving

that young man to form promiscuous friendships ; driving him in the way of every species of temptation ; driving him pell-mell into the haunts of vice and villainy ; for, who can expect a young fellow like that to be always at home ? He will go out, and ought to go out ; but when he does, where is he to go ? What connexions is he likely to form ? Who are likely to be his associates when full of blood and spirit, he has the means of indulging in every extravagant pleasure ? And then, his wife—what is she to do during his absence ? deserted by her friends, because spurned by her relatives : no one to converse with, no one to visit, no one in whom she can with safety confide. It is true—very true, that she ought to have thought of this before ; but then, she didn't think of it : she rushed into this position, and there she is ! It is also true that she ought to consider herself but justly punished for her disobedience ; but, Captain, as men of the world, you and I well know it to be unsafe, to say the least of it, to punish a young and beautiful woman too severely in this way. Besides, we ought to take into consideration that all the punishment in such a case falls upon her, which is not the

correct thing, by any means. You would not wish, I am certain, to be unduly severe with her ; you would not wish to stand as a barrier between her and happiness. I feel quite convinced that you never wished to do this, and yet is this the very thing you do. I should have done in every respect, no doubt, precisely as you have ; but I think, that after a time, I should have been induced to feel that I was thereby defeating the very object I wished to attain. Now, I never yet found you unreasonable. I am not a man to flatter ; you will acquit me, I am sure, of any desire to do that ; but I never knew you stubbornly to repudiate any rational view. It is hence that I now feel quite sure that, if you look at this matter again—calmly, you will be as well convinced, as I plainly confess that I am, that you will not be doing your duty as father if you sternly hold out after this.”

“ General, I need not assure you that my only object in holding out has been to secure, eventually, my poor girl’s happiness. God bless her ! I love her as fondly as before. Nay, she seems to be even more dear to me than ever.”

“ I believe it. I know it. I feel it. Forgive her: forgive them both. She is a good girl, and he well deserves her. He treats her, as he ought, with the most affectionate tenderness.”

“ I am not sure of that.”

“ I am—perfectly sure. The intense, the artless fervour with which she assured me that such was the fact, renders it impossible for me to disbelieve it. Receive them, then. Come, you have no wish to torture her. Be reconciled. And—mark my words, Captain,—they will be happy, most happy, the happiest pair that ever lived.”

“ If I were sure of that——”

“ *Be* sure of it! make up your mind to it. Be sure of this, also, that it rests with you whether they are happy or miserable. Don’t let them live as if they were outcasts of society. Don’t drive that youth to seek an exciting change of scene among blacklegs and *roués*. Let him feel that you care for him, and he will care for you. Let him feel that he has some one with whom he can advise. Let them both be restored to the position they ought to occupy.

Let them both feel that in you they have a father, indeed. By Jupiter, sir, you'll do wrong if you continue to close your doors against them. Come, say you will receive them ; say you will meet them at my house : that, perhaps, will be better, for I know him to be a high spirited dog, who is not much enamoured of humility, and I respect him the more ; for it affords, in my view, an additional proof that he takes his stand solely upon the honourable character of his intentions. Come, let me arrange it. Don't give me an answer now. Sleep upon it. Turn it well over in your mind : weigh every circumstance deliberately and calmly, and then let me know your decision."

This the Captain most willingly promised to do. He was even then prepared to decide, but the General would not receive his answer : he insisted upon the propriety of a little more reflection, although he by no means conceived it to be absolutely necessary, and soon after left, in the perfect conviction that the object proposed had been attained.

CHAPTER III.

STANLEY AND BOB PURCHASE SOME EXPERIENCE
AT EPSOM.

IT were, perhaps, very vain, if not very presumptuous, to speculate deeply upon the subject without data ; but, if any purely patriotic member of the Commons were to move for a return of all the money lost and won on the Derby, such return would be a document of extraordinary interest, and one which, in the nature of things, would go far towards stunning the world. With the aid of a few accomplished calculating boys in full practice, the thing might be easily got at ; for they would only have two distinct classes to separate—the winners, and the losers,—to get on as fast as could well be expected ; while they would

clearly derive very material assistance from a knowledge of the fact that twenty sporting-characters may bet to the amount of twenty millions, without one of them winning or losing a pound.

But, apart from the high consideration having reference to the actual discovery of the amount, it seems abundantly clear that, although in a nominal sense they who are deep in the science of betting—for a science it has indisputably become—have it hollow ; the greatest amount of money is actually won from the brilliant superficial professors ; it being a striking truth, and one which no sort of sophistry can smother, that in betting—although it is not so in music,—an imperfect sharp makes the most perfect flat.

When the mind is brought to bear with due weight upon the varied ramifications of this interesting science, it will be found to be one of so much excellence, *per se*, that, although it may be even now pretty well taught at our Universities, it will appear to be rather strange in the abstract that prizes should not have been established as well for that as for Greek

and mathematics. This might, perhaps, in consequence of its immediate proximity to Newmarket, obtain in the first instance at Cambridge; for, albeit every Cambridge man now may be said to possess a fair knowledge of the elements of the science, that knowledge is clearly insufficient to induce a correct appreciation of its beauties, or to guide a sporting character out of that attractive labyrinth, into which ardent tyros are too prone to rush. How admirable is it to see a strictly scientific sporting character making up his book! As a grocer conducts a transaction of barter, as a high-toned attorney standing boldly upon the legitimate integrity of his principles, makes out an ingenious bill of costs, to cover with comfort the sums received, so *he* weighs every item again and again with a perfectly uninterceptible view to its bearing upon the general balance. Nor is it necessary for him to be a judge of horse-flesh. By no means. He sports his money safely to the extent of tens of thousands, without seeing one of the horses that are entered: he bets upon credit, the credit of those who bet before him: the exer-

cise of his own individual judgment is altogether supererogatory: he gives and takes the odds in the dark; but, oh! what a highly enlightened darkness is his! And in this, perhaps, consists the chief beauty of the science. If a horse be the favourite at Tattersall's, he is, in consequence, the favourite all over the world, if even he should have but three legs. His pedigree is nothing: his name is up. He is the *favourite*! That is held to be sufficient by regular sporting characters, from the highest to the lowest; from those who take six to four in thousands, to those who take three to two in fourpenny pieces.

Now Stanley's knowledge of this science was extremely superficial. He had, indeed, been enlightened by Sir William to a certain extent: he had had his eyes sufficiently opened to see his way with perfect distinctness into a hole, but by no means sufficiently opened to see his way out again; which, when an individual is to be fleeced, is a far more ingenious mode of procedure than that of making him believe that he is quite in the dark; because, in that case, he feels his way so carefully that

the odds are decidedly against your being able to get him in at all: whereas, one who has been half enlightened on the subject, believes that he knows all about it, and enters into the thing with all the confidence in Nature. This was precisely the case with Stanley. He had before no conception that so much money was to be won with so much ease, and, therefore, bet to the extent of some thousands, and would have bet more, but Sir William, who was far too ingenious to frighten him, *in limine*, not only closed his book, but resolved, for the look of the thing, to induce him to hedge down at Epsom with one of those *purely* sporting men who are always to be found in the ring, in order that what he might actually lose he might nominally cover.

Well, all the preliminaries having been arranged after the most approved fashion, Stanley, Amelia, and Sir William, on the morning of the great Derby day, proceeded to the residence of the widow, who had prepared a sumptuous breakfast, and sundry hampers containing champagne, sherry, chickens, tongues, pigeon-pies, cakes, and a variety of other little

articles, designed for demolition on the course. They were all in high spirits. Their pleasure, perhaps, sprang from various sources : but they were all, nevertheless, on most exalted terms, as well with each other as with themselves ; and, as Sir William had suggested the expediency of starting early, at nine o'clock precisely, the carriage was announced, and looked—when the party had taken their seats, and the servants, in flaming liveries, were on the box, and the postboys were mounted, duly embellished with satin jackets of the brightest celestial blue,—rather *distingué* than not.

It was a hazy morning, and the atmosphere was like a hot bath ; but even in those which are usually the most quiet streets, the carriages were rattling up to the doors, and the servants were bringing out the hampers, and all seemed to be in one universal bustle. It is not, however, until they reach the point at which the carriages from all parts of the metropolis meet, that the unsophisticated are able to form a correct conception of the varied characteristics of the equipages that are to accompany them down the road. Here Stanley and the widow,

neither of whom had been down before, were amazed. There was nothing in the shape of a vehicle which had not had its wheels greased expressly for the occasion; nothing in the similitude of a horse, at all likely to do the six-and-thirty miles in twenty hours without giving up the ghost, which had not received an extra severe curry-combing, together with an additional feed of corn, with the view of imparting respectability and spirit to his appearance on that auspicious day. Such, then, being the generally joyful state of things, of course plenty of amusement was to be found; and, as Stanley and Sir William made highly characteristic observations upon every vehicle, and every creature in every vehicle, of a remarkable character, they were all very merry, and laughed very heartily, and seemed to be the happiest of the happy.

“Now,” said Sir William, as they entered the lane which leads from the town of Epsom to the Downs, “you may all go to sleep for half an hour, for this is the most tedious part of the journey.”

They were not, however, disposed to go to

sleep, although the line moved but slowly along; for as it did move at a pace, the consolation was conspicuous, and, on arriving at the top, the brilliant appearance of the Downs well repaid them for whatever tedium they might have experienced.

“ Oh, what a lovely scene !” exclaimed the widow, directing Amelia’s attention towards the hill. “ Well, really now this is enchanting ! Sir William, have we to go to that beautiful spot ?”

“ As you please,” replied the Baronet ; “ but I think that we had better get near the grand stand, where the horses will pass quite close to us.”

“ That *will* be delightful ! Oh ! will it not, my love ?”

Amelia assented, and directions were given to get as near the grand stand as possible, on a line with the course. On entering the enclosure, they were all highly pleased with the scene which burst upon them ; but the widow—oh ! she was in ecstacies ! She had never, she was sure she had never in the whole course of her life beheld anything so heavenly !—

everything did look so gay, so delightful, so glorious ! And then the grand stand ! Well, really—she never did !—oh ! nothing could surpass it !

No sooner had they taken their station than Bob duly appeared with the horses, which, when Stanley and Sir William, at the earnest solicitation of the widow, had taken some refreshment, they mounted, and rode to the wood.

Stanley was a very fair judge of a horse, and when all that were to start were brought out, one of the outsiders appeared to him to have been betted against rather too heavily. He therefore re-examined his book, and the result of that re-examination was, that he did not much like his position. Nor did Bob much like his ; for, by virtue of making cross-bets, with the view of hedging, he had got into an extraordinary arithmetical maze, having made divers gross and disgraceful mistakes, by recording in his favour a variety of bets, which were in reality against him. He was, therefore, highly pleased when Stanley returned, which he did as soon as possible, in order to back his

own judgment; and having entered the ring, he almost immediately got into conversation with Major Foxe, who pompously pronounced himself open to take the three first horses against the field for an even thousand. This was precisely what Stanley wanted, and he took the bet at once, and they formally exchanged cards, and then made several other bets, which brought Stanley home pretty safely, very much to the delight of Sir William, whom he consulted, and with whom, on the strength of the Major's bets, he increased his liabilities, and having closed his book, invited the Major to join them.

While Stanley was in the ring, thus bringing himself nominally round, Bob, with unparalleled zeal and intensity of feeling, was studying the nature of his position, as strikingly manifested by his book, and found eventually the evidence it imparted to be of a nature so particularly conflicting, that he all at once became so enlightened, that he perceived with amazing distinctness, that he couldn't understand it at all. He tried hard, nay, he tried with desperation, to comprehend the bearings of his hiero-

glyphical conceptions ; but the more desperately he tried, the more profoundly he studied, the more acutely and cunningly he reckoned, the more chaotic his intellectual faculties became, which was, to his extremely sensitive feelings, indeed, truly terrible. At length he confidentially intimated to the widow's coachman, who was, at that exciting period, upon the box, that he was ardently anxious to have the benefit of his advice upon a subject of no inconsiderable importance ; and the coachman, who had acquired the reputation of being rather a far-seeing individual, accordingly descended to consult him.

“ Coachman,” said he, with due solemnity of aspect, “ did you see that brindle in the course there, just now, which cocked his blessed tail mysterious atween his legs, and cut away back’ards and forrards, acause he couldn’t tell at all how to get out ?”

“ In course,” replied the coachman, “ I did.”

“ Well, then, I’m just in that identical speeches of mess. There’s lots of ways to get out ; but I know no more how, than that brin-

dle, which makes it just as bad as if there wasn't."

"Werry good; but if you'll just convert that into reg'lar English, I shall be able to understand it, perhaps."

"Why, don't you see!" exclaimed Bob, disgusted with the extreme dulness of the fellow's perception. "Don't I tell you I'm in a blessed mess here, and want you to show me how to see my way out on it!—*Do* you know anything at all about betting?"

"Why, it strikes me I do, as well as here and there one."

"Then cast your invincibles over this book." Here Bob pointed out his hieroglyphics. "Them means brandy-and-water—them rum-and-water—them fourpenn'orths—them ale—and them there, where two ha'pences is, means, of course, half-and-half. Now, just look deliberate over that, and then tell me exact how I stand. There's a trump!"

The coachman took the book, and studied the state of things intently, while Bob, with much earnestness, watched his emotions. At length, with great gravity, he spoke to this effect:—

" I say, though, my buffer, wort *have* you bin at ! You 're the boy to make money by bettin' !"

" What's the matter ?" cried Bob, who felt really alarmed.

" Wort 's the matter ! Look here ! You 've just managed it dexterous so, that, if that 'ere oss don't win, you lose pretty nigh all the lot ; and even he does win, you don't win a screw."

" Why, how do you make that out ?" demanded Bob, indignantly.

" How do I make it hout ! Why, look here—look at them there brandies-an'-water—why, they 're hevery indiividual one on 'em agin you !"

" How do you mean ? Haven't I taken seven to two, four or five times over ?"

" I know you have ; but haven't you hedged off there by giving four to one on the same oss, four or five times over ? Don't you see ! As far as the fourpenn'orths goes, it don't matter which wins : it 's like giving two fardens for a ha'penny ; but you 're in for the brandy-and-water, and you 're in for the ale, and you 're in for the whole mob of arf-and-arf."

Bob stood for a moment as if petrified. The spirit of incredulity took possession of him at

first, and caused him to have a most profound contempt for his friend's calculating faculty, albeit he did strongly feel that there was a horrible hitch somewhere; but when it had been pointed out to him distinctly how the various gross mistakes had been made, he perspired with great freedom, and looked dreadfully cut up.

"Well," said he, scratching his head with unexampled perseverance, "I'm a donkey—I know it—I know I'm a donkey, and so I don't want to be told. As the French says, this is a out-and-out case of *horse de combat*. You are right—oh! I see regular plain that you are right. If the favourite don't do the trick, *perhaps* I shan't be in a pickle! and the favourite's no favourite of mine."

"You've seed the osses all on 'em, haven't yer? Is there any one you particular fancy?"

"Why, yes, there's a little un there; but there's fifty to one against him, so he can't be no sort, though he looks as if he might be."

"Now, take my advice: you go and get all the hods you can agin the field. Never mind any oss—take the field. That's the only way

to perwent your losing all the whole squad-
dy.”

“ I see ! I see ! Here, catch hold a minute. I won’t be gone long. I know where to find a few trumps as gives odds. But *may* I be smothered ! ”

Swelling with indignation at his dense stupidity, and cherishing a bright and most beautiful hope, Bob started with the view of honourably taking in some gentleman whom he had the felicity to number among his friends. The news, however, had spread that the field was sure to win ; all wished to take the very odds that he wished to take. In vain he endeavoured to inspire them with the belief that they thereby stood in their own light : they wouldn’t have it :—they pronounced it simultaneously “ no go.” Thus foiled, thus deceived, and that, too, in a quarter in which he had reposed the utmost confidence, and in which he had centred every hope, his heart sank within him as he returned to communicate the melancholy fact to his friend. It was then that he felt that he was in the hands of fate,—it was then that he promised, that if in this, his ex-

tremity, fate would but be propitious, no power on earth should ever induce him to be so consummate a donkey again. And yet—why—who could tell? The favourite!—the favourite was a good horse,—a capital horse! He didn't like the look of him much, but he might win,—he ought to win,—nay, on reflection, he *would* win. He resolved to entertain no doubt about the matter, for every doubt was painful. Hurrah for the favourite! The favourite against the field! The favourite for a thousand! The favourite for ever! He was not going then to lie down in a ditch and die!

The bell rang, and all were on the *qui vive*. The most earnest anxiety prevailed. The next two minutes were to decide that in which all seemed interested deeply. Had every man present had all he possessed in the world then at stake, his suspense at that moment could not have appeared more painful. The horses started. “They are off! they are off!” shouted thousands simultaneously, and every eye was strained in the direction of the hill. They appeared! They swept the brow with the speed of lightning! They passed the cor-

ner!—they came straight up the course! Pink was a-head. “Pink! pink! Bravo, pink.—Yellow! yellow! Go along, pink!—Blue!—Green!—Red!”—nay, every colour in the rainbow was shouted, in order to urge each along. The post was gained. Two seemed neck and neck. Few at the moment could tell which had won; but as one of the two was the favourite, Bob shouted, “The favourite! the favourite! Oh! hollow!” And he leaped like a deer from the back of the carriage, and opened his shoulders, and rubbed his hands, and patted his horses, and slapped his thigh, and threw himself at once into a state of ecstasy the most delicious. The next moment a sound reached his ear,—a sound which made him tremble! He turned towards the winning-post, and there he beheld—the number of an outsider! The favourite had lost! Instantly his countenance fell. He slapped his thigh no more. He struck Marmion on the nose for presuming to snort at such a moment, conceiving it to be in the abstract highly reprehensible, and sank into an awful state of melancholic gloom.

Sir William, of course, was delighted, but he studied to conceal his delight at the time; while Stanley, who had brought himself pretty nearly home, having won all his bets with the Major, congratulated himself on having backed his own judgment. The Major did not appear to be much depressed. He was a loser, he said, it was true, but not to any great amount, having taken a variety of other bets, which had been decided in his favour. He held it, therefore, to be a matter of no material importance; and, having politely declined the pressing invitation of Stanley to partake of their refreshments, he begged that he might have the honour of a call at the United Service Club in the morning, as on settling day the probability was that he should have to leave town.

The widow, who playfully affected to be very indignant indeed with that tiresome thing of a horse, which had been the cause of her losing a dozen pair of gloves to Amelia, now ordered the hampers to be opened, and when the leaf of a table had been adjusted upon the doors of the carriage, it was speedily covered with the viands she had prepared, and they all ate heartily,

with the collateral enjoyment of the scene around them, which was certainly one of great excitement and splendour.

They had, however, no sooner commenced their repast than the widow's benevolence was powerfully excited; for a party of four ladies and two gentlemen, who occupied the carriage next to hers, had to their horror found, on their hamper being opened, that the new rope by which it had been suspended from the axle, had stretched to an extent that enabled the hamper in little hilly parts of the road to come in contact with the ground with sufficient violence to break to atoms the dishes, bottles, and glasses, and thereby to mix them and the provisions together; and truly to the eye it was a most unpleasing mixture, inasmuch as the pie-crust was saturated with wine, the broken glass had worked its way into the chickens, the pigeons with the gravy were mixed up with stout and straw, while the ham had been made, by the fragments of the bottles, to appear as if it had been nibbled by a legion of rats.

The widow, when she saw their distress, felt for them acutely, and sent to beg their accept-

ance of one of her pies, and part of her ham, with a pair of her chickens, and so on, which they did not by any means like to receive ; but, on being warmly pressed, they at length consented to accept them, provided they were also presented with a card, which proviso was agreed to, and all were made happy.

Immediately after their repast, Stanley and Sir William remounted their horses, being anxious to make a few bets upon the next race ; and, while they were gone, Bob, the widow's servants, and the postboys commenced operations upon the refreshments which had been left, and which, as the widow was exceedingly liberal with her wine, they all amazingly enjoyed, with the exception of Bob, whose spirit was painfully perturbed. He was haunted by his erroneous calculations, and spectres of innumerable glasses of brandy-and-water, and rows of pots of ale and half-and-half, which really seemed to have no end, flitted before him as merrily as if they were overjoyed at the fact of his having to pay for them all. The only question with him was, how could he get out of his embarrassed position ?—and his utter

inability to conceive a satisfactory answer to this question dealt destruction to his appetite, and rendered him wretched. At length he managed to hit upon an expedient by which he might gain at least a trifle towards covering his extremely heavy spirituous liabilities. In the next race eight horses were to run, and he proposed a quiet sweepstakes, in which he got the coachman, the footman, and one of the postilions to join. He then tore a piece of paper into eight, and having established the numbers respectively thereon, and folded and put them into his hat, each subscribed half-a-crown, and then drew two numbers, and Bob's were the first and second horses on the list.

"Well," thought he, "this is something." And so it was; and he began to eat a little, and to feel somewhat better. Half a sovereign would indisputably pay for ten good shilling glasses. There could be no miscalculation about that, although he quite forgot his own small subscription,—which perhaps was as well, for his mind was the more at ease, and the consequence was, that he eventually made a very highly respectable meal.

The bell rang again for the course to be cleared, and Stanley and Sir William returned.

“ Well, which is the best horse ? ” inquired the widow.

“ The favourite,” replied Stanley, “ I should say, in this race.”

“ The favourite :—well, Amelia and I are going to have another bet.”

“ Indeed,” said Amelia, “ I do not understand it.”

“ Nor do I, my love, much ; but we must have a bet. Now, I ’ll bet you—let me see—a satin dress !—and you shall have which horse you please.”

“ That will be about two to one,” observed Stanley.

“ No, no—one to one ; that is to say, even.”

“ But Amelia will bet two to one.”

“ Dear me, how ridiculous ! One dress—one cannot be two ! ”

“ I grant you that, of course ; but I should say that it takes nearly double the quantity—”

“ Indeed, sir, it takes no such thing,” interrupted the blushing widow ; for although she

patted Stanley very playfully, and smiled, she did not approve of his making so incorrect an observation in the presence of Sir William. It was personal—very personal. Besides, she required but a few yards more than Amelia; not double the quantity, nor anything like double the quantity.

“ I ’ll tell you, now, what will be a fair bet,” said Stanley. “ You take the favourite against the field for a dress: that will bring the thing about even.”

“ Very well; let it be so. The favourite is mine. We must sport, my love, of course, like the rest.”

Amelia consented to this arrangement, and the race almost immediately commenced. The excitement was not nearly so great; but there was still amply sufficient to keep all alive, and the colours were called as they passed as before. The favourite lost, and Stanley lost with the favourite. The widow also lost; and Bob lost the sweepstakes.

Of course the last-mentioned loss had the greatest effect upon the loser. He had firmly and resolutely made up his mind to win, and

hence experienced a dreadful degree of depression. He felt that, in the nature of things, this was hard, and that fortune neither smiled upon the most meritorious, nor aided those who stood most in need of assistance. To him that half sovereign would have been of great service. The rest did not want it so much; for they had lost nothing on the Derby. He considered that, if fortune had not been sand-blind,—if she had had only half an eye open, she would have seen this,—and then, of course, the sweepstakes had been his; for he was sure that, to his knowledge, he had done nothing to offend her.

While involved in this deep consideration, standing like a statue, with his hands in his smalls,—which, indeed, was his customary attitude when he happened to have anything of a strictly metaphysical character to compass,—a gentleman without his coat approached in wonderful haste, and, while performing a variety of original antics commenced shouting, apparently in a frightful state of excitement.

“ *Now, who ’s for the last nine, the last nine, the last nine! I’ ve on’y three minutes! A*

sovering for a shilling, or three for half-crown, *to* decide this here vunderful vagear *atween* them there two svell sportin' indiwidgeals, *the* Marqvis off Vortford and a honerble Hurl, *for* five thousand guineas aside here! *I'm* obligated for to dress like this here, *cos* the honerble Hurl don't believe as the people von't think these here soverings is good uns. *Who* 'll have the last nine, the last nine, the last nine here!

"This is a do," observed Bob to a decent-looking person standing near him.

"Do you think so? I've a great mind to have three: it may be a bet," said the person addressed. "I'll have half-a-crown's worth;" and he had, and he appeared to be delighted with his bargain, and joyfully showed them to Bob, who was amazed.

"It is a wager," thought he. "They are good uns—real good uns. Why, three of these would set me all square!" It struck him at the moment that fortune, to propitiate him, had suggested that bet, and had sent him that man.

Now, who's for the last six! *I've* on'y one minute *for* this vunderful vagear off ten

thousand guineas. *Who 'll* have the last six for a crown here !”

Bob anxiously gave him five shillings, and received in return the six “sovereigns,” which he instantly found to be villanous brass. But the fellow was off ! he twisted into the crowd like an imp ; and, as he who had prompted the purchase, by showing the three real sovereigns, shot also away, it at once became evident to Bob that they were confederates.

“Only just hold my horses,” said he to a man standing by ; and he started off after them fiercely. But, how vain was the pursuit ! The next moment they were lost to him for ever.

This was indeed, a heavy blow. It was terrible to his already wounded feelings. It was cruel. He could have cried ; but he repressed the rising extract of sorrow with indignation.

“To be such a out-and-out fool !” he exclaimed clenching his fists very desperately, and looking very vicious, “when I ought to have known that it was nothing but a do ; when my own common sense ought to have told me it was nothing but a regular dead take in ! Here’s things !” he continued, hold-

ing the sovereigns again before his wondering eyes. "Here's muck! Here's a blessed five shillings' worth! *Don't* I wish I could see that there varmint anywheres about here? *Wouldn't* I give him a leetle pepper?"

Again Bob looked anxiously around; but, as he could not catch even a glimpse of the ingenious gentleman in question, he returned to his horses, frightfully depressed.

"Hallo, my Bobby!" exclaimed the coachman, "anything petickler' o'clock?"

"No, nothing of much odds," replied Bob; who conceived it to be expedient to keep the sovereign job a secret, at least from that particular quarter.

"We're goin' for to 'ave another sweepstakes. There's on'y four 'osses. Will yer join us?"

"Oh, if you like. I'm safe to lose. Nobody never had such sweet luck as me. But I'll be in it."

He accordingly put down his half-crown, and drew; but he scorned to look at the number. He would *not* know which horse he had drawn until after the race, and therefore placed the

paper carefully in his pocket, while he looked another way, lest his eyes should fall upon it by accident. He then had a glass of wine with the rest beneath the foot-board ; but continued to be mournfully silent, although he occasionally gave his horses for the slightest misbehaviour the most severe look they ever witnessed.

The interval between the races was in this case unusually short. The course was no sooner clear than the bell rang again, and the horses started. They did the half mile in about half a minute, and actually the very horse which won cleverly by a length, was the horse which Bob had drawn. In his view this altered the general aspect of things most materially ; for, albeit, it but restored him to the position which he occupied at the conclusion of the Derby, it was abundantly manifest to him that his "luck" had really changed ; and he brightened up signally, and chatted a little, and breathed upon the four half-crowns, and deposited them promptly in the off-pocket of his smalls, with an air which denoted intense satisfaction. He then proposed that the next sweepstakes should be doubled. This, however, was declined. The same sum was put

down, and they drew; but Bob would not have looked at what he had drawn if any man had offered him seven and sixpence. He had not looked at the last, and he had won. He naturally felt that there was a great deal in that.

Amelia and the widow now alighted, with the view of promenading the course; and, as this had been at the sole suggestion of Sir William, it was specially appreciated by the widow, who scarcely could tell how she did feel while walking for the first time in public with an honourable baronet. It were poor indeed to describe that feeling as being that of pride. It was a higher, a purer, a more intensely delicious feeling than that; and she stepped so lightly, and her plume waved so gracefully, while she felt so much ecstasy sparkling in her eyes, that, as she tripped past Amelia, she really did think that any absolute stranger would be puzzled to tell which of the two looked the younger.

While they were admiring the beauty of the Grand Stand, and other prominent features of the gay scene around them, Bob, elated with his success in the last sweepstakes, felt that,

as Fortune now seemed disposed to favour him, he ought not to thwart her beneficent inclinations, and therefore set off for one of the booths, in which merville appeared to him to be played upon a very fair, straight-forward principle. He stood for some time, and looked on, and saw a great deal of money won and paid without a murmur, from a heap of half-crowns which stood by the side of an open cash-box, in which there was a sufficient number of notes to bind up into a good-sized volume, and a quantity of sovereigns, which seemed to be beyond calculation.

This display of wealth dazzled the eyes of Bob; and he resolved to have a trial. He put a shilling upon the black: it came black, and he took up two. He put a shilling upon the yellow: it came yellow, and he took up nine. Could he presume to doubt that Fortune had deigned to smile upon him then? He put two half-crowns upon the yellow, feeling that eight times that amount would be particularly acceptable; but it happened to come black. He tried again with five shillings: it was red. He tried five shillings more: it was blue. Well,

it surely must come yellow next ! He tried another five shillings : it came blue again. Blue was the favourite ; but, then, five shilling stakes were rather heavy ! He put half-a-crown upon the blue : it was yellow. Tut ! *if* he had but kept to the yellow ! He tried yellow again : it was black. Then again, and it was black : and again, until he had no more silver. What, then, was to be done ? Should he change his last sovereign ? He would, and stake five shillings of it upon the yellow. He did so. It should be the last if he lost—the very last,—that he had made up his mind to. The ball was off : he watched it eagerly : it seemed to wish to go into the yellow : nay, it absolutely did go into the yellow ; but on the instant changed its mind, and hopped into the blue. How extraordinary ! Well ! *should* he stake one more half-crown ? No, he wouldn't ; and yet, eight half-crowns were twenty shillings ! One more—only one : down it went ; and the ball, as if guided by some malicious demon, popped again into the blue. Bob pressed his lips, and frowned, and looked round the booth wildly, and then attempted to leave ; but he felt with-

in him something which urged him to turn, and he stood for some time in a state of irresolution.

"Now, gents, make your game: the ball's off, make your game!" cried the fellow who presided at the table. "If you won't play, gents, drink: sherry, champagne there, soda water, any thing you like. Make your game!"

This had the effect of arousing Bob from his reverie. He resolved to stake five shillings more. He put half-a-crown down upon the yellow: it was red. The other half-crown followed: it was black. He now seemed desperate. He tried the black, and won; but the black merely covered the stake. He tried the yellow, and it was blue; and then the blue, and it was yellow. Five shillings only had he left. Should he stake it all at once, hit or miss? Down it went; and in an instant it was lost.

His feelings were agonizing now. He, indeed, felt as if it really mattered not much what became of him. His eyes seemed as if about to start from their sockets. He struck his head with violence; and, as he left the booth slowly, he could not refrain from shed-

ing tears. The greatest trouble physics all the rest. His previous losses now seemed as nothing. He might have got over them with comfort; but, how was he to get over this? All the money he had was gone, including that which he had borrowed of the amiable cook, and he had the whole of his wet bets to settle, and promptly, too, in order to sustain his reputation!

While lost in the thought of this his affliction position, he encountered a creature who had a table, with twenty or thirty sovereigns thereon, and three thimbles, surrounded by divers individuals, who were betting upon the wonderful discovery of a pea. Bob had frequently heard of this game: he well knew it to be a dirty and disreputable swindle; and yet the thing appeared to be so simple, while the creature who presided seemed so bungling, and moreover, so excessively blind to his own interest, that in more than one instance would he have put down a stake had his pockets not been quite so hungry as they were. He could tell where the pea was, beyond all dispute. It was *proved* that he could, for a gentleman who

stood beside him, and who had not sufficient confidence in his own judgment, asked him which thimble he thought the pea was under; and, having pointed out one, the gentleman threw down a sovereign; and under that identical thimble it was; and, when the pea was again adjusted, and the gentleman had again appealed to him, another sovereign was staked, and he was, of course, right again.

Bob, however, was very much vexed at this. Two sovereigns had been won through his instrumentality; and, although it was all very well to win money for others, he naturally thought that it would have been better had he won those two sovereigns for himself: which he might have done of course!—there could not be two decent opinions about that; and, therefore, feeling that the fellow was essentially stupid, or, at all events, not quite *au fait* to the trick, he ran to borrow half-a-sovereign of the coachman, and returned to the table, full of hope. The gentleman who had successfully appealed to him was still betting; and, when he lost, he appeared to lose most foolishly, seeing that he invariably fixed on the thimble

under which Bob was sure the pea was not. He therefore applied at Bob again; and Bob again pointed to the right one, and was complimented highly upon the extraordinary quickness of his perception; and then it was he tried for himself. He saw the pea distinctly placed under the thimble in the middle: he could have sworn to it conscientiously.

“*I’ll bet half-a-sovereign,*” said he, producing his all.

“Bet a sovereign,” cried the creature. “Put a sovereign down. I don’t mind about losing a sovereign!”

“No; only half,” said Bob. “Don’t touch it.”

Very well. The money was placed upon the table, and covered: the thimble was raised, and the pea was *not* there!

Bob looked at the fellow with great ferocity. He also looked ferociously at the man who had urged him on. He half suspected him of being a confederate; and had he been sure of it—quite sure—with all the pleasure in life would he have thrashed him; but he was not; and therefore, all he felt justified in doing was

to give free vent to his indignation, which he did in terms which he deemed appropriate; and having consigned the whole gang to the torture of their own consciences, left them with a feeling of unspeakable disgust.

“Well,” said he, as he returned, with a truly wretched aspect, “there’s another half sovereign out of me. What is this world when you come for to look at it? What *is it* but a out-and-out den of blessed thieves? Fortune! blow Fortune! what do I owe her? *Aint* she been against me all along? Did ever any fellow have such pleasant luck as I’ve had? I’m a fool—of course I know that I’m a fool, ’cause I was quite conscientious that that pea dodge was a do. Who’s to blame, then? Don’t it just serve me right? Is there any pity for me? Not a ha’p’orth.”

This last observation was made by way of solace; but the comfort it imparted was not strikingly apparent. He still held that he had been cruelly ill-used, and hence became more dreadfully dejected than before.

All were now becoming anxious for the last race, save Bob. He really cared but little

about whether he won or lost. He was in that frame of mind, the indulgence of which is extremely illaudable, and highly pernicious, inasmuch as it reduces a man at once to that point of despair which prompts him to repudiate the employment of the power at his command, with the view of surmounting those embarrassments in which he may be involved. This is indeed a disease—a most ruinous disease, and one for which the only immediate cure is a little unexpected success. Then, he who was gloomily apathetic becomes active; his dormant energies are roused: he sees his error, and gladly embraces those means to which he before closed his eyes, and that wilfully, being conscious of their existence. The bell rang, and the race commenced. He took no interest in it. When it was over, he just glanced at the paper carelessly. Why, he had drawn the very horse! He could not have supposed it possible. He had thought that nothing in life was more certain than that every earthly thing was going against him. On receiving the sweepstakes, he therefore felt his heart lighter, and his spirits raising rapidly;

and, when Sir William, to whom he had been particularly attentive, presented him with a sovereign, he really began to believe that his case was not nearly so desperate as he had imagined. Still it could not be concealed that he had lost a heavy sum ; and he was just on the point of entering into an abstruse calculation touching the total amount, when Stanley called to him, and gave him instructions to take the horses quietly home.

The posters were then immediately put to, and in five minutes the widow's carriage moved off the Downs. Bob lingered : he scarcely knew why ; still he lingered ; and, as he was standing thoughtfully between his horses, a friend of his approached, and informed him that he had that very instant won seven half-crowns at a "gold and silver table," to which he pointed, and which stood but a few yards from the spot. On receiving this momentous intelligence, Bob looked at his friend, as if to be sure that he was totally unconnected with the scheme,—being inclined at the moment to make every man an object of suspicion, and, having satisfied himself on that particular

point, he got a boy to hold his horses, and repaired to the table in question without delay. At this establishment a gaudily-dressed female presided; and, although she was not extremely beautiful, the purity of her complexion, such as it was, was duly protected from the sun by a comprehensive umbrella. She stood in a commanding position, upon a stool, with a rake in one hand, and a white cotton cabbage-net, nearly filled with silver in the other, while on the table, which was emblazoned with all sorts of brilliant prizes, stood a dice-box of a Brobdignagian build, and divers large — and of course, unloaded,—dice; and ever and anon she screamed, in tones which bore an ear-piercing resemblance to those of a cracked clarionet in the hands of a man who knows no touch thereof,—“Now, who’s for the next prize! A shillin’ a throw, or three throws for arf-a-crown. I’ll warrant all the prizes to be on the dice. The extent of your losses you’re sure to know: the extent of your winnin’s you can’t. When I lose, my losses is heavy: when you lose, your losses is light!”

“Well,” thought Bob, “it’s quite out of

nature to be much of rig in this. I only want to win a pound ! I'll *have* a try. See if I don't. It *will* be very hard if I can't get something !”

He accordingly subscribed half-a-crown to the concern, and having placed the dice in the box, boldly threw them, when the lady began to count with surpassing velocity, “Six and six is twelve, and four’s nineteen, and five’s twenty-seven, and three’s thirty-four, and one’s forty-five, and four’s fifty-two, and five’s fifty-nine, and three’s sixty-five, and four and four’s eight, and six is seventy-two ! Sixty-two is a prize of five crowns ; but seventy-two’s a blank, as you see.”

Bob certainly saw that seventy-two was a blank ; but he did not exactly approve of this rapid mode of counting. He had not been at all used to it ; he couldn’t keep up with it ; and, as he did entertain a vague notion that she had in one instance made a slight mistake, he determined on counting them himself the next time, and threw again ; and again the lady’s tongue went to work, like the clapper of an alarum-bell, and wouldn’t stop until she had reached sixty, which, of course,

was a blank. Bob, however, was not satisfied. He began to count himself; but, as he proceeded, the lady joined him, being anxious to render him all possible assistance, which so effectually confused his intellects that he found himself utterly unable to count at all. Assuming, therefore, on compulsion, that she was right, he threw the third time, and threw forty-eight, which the experienced eye of the lady soon detected, and she ingeniously made fifty-six of them, in consequence of forty-eight being a prize of three sovereigns. But Bob could not make fifty-six: he insisted upon having time; when the lady leered affectionately at two gentlemen, who were standing by, and who, as they perceived that Bob was going on steadily, made a sudden slight, but, of course, purely accidental rush; and, while one of them was making all sorts of apologies, the other dexterously turned over one of the dice; which the lady no sooner perceived than she exclaimed with great propriety, "What's all this about? What do you interrupt the gentleman for when he's a-counting? You ought to know better. Go on, sir; pray do; and take your time about it."

Bob accordingly counted them again, and then said,

“There, I knew you was wrong: there’s only fifty.”

“Very well, sir. I’ll take your word for it. We’re all on us liable to error; human nature can’t be perfect. Whatever prize it is, you shall have, sir. Fifty. Only two too many sir. Try again: don’t be down-hearted. Forty-eight’s a prize of three pound. Fifty, you see, is a blank.”

“Why, it *was* forty-eight,” said Bob’s friend, “before that man there made a two a four!”

In an instant the hat of the individual who had thus spoken mysteriously dropped over his eyes. It was not at all too large for him; on the contrary, it was rather a tight fit; but the brim on either side, nevertheless, did come down upon his shoulders, as if by magic. Bob in a moment saw how the case stood; and, being anxious for his friend to appear to give evidence, flew to his aid; but he had no sooner done so than his own hat went down in the same most remarkable manner.

Now it is extremely difficult, under these peculiar circumstances, for a man to face the world. He cannot raise his hat with either promptitude or comfort. Should he happen to have anything at all of a nose, the tip thereof is certain to catch in the lining. To the ancient Romans this would have been abundantly manifest ; and, probably, the children of Israel of this our day wear gossamers, without any lining at all on this very account. And none can blame them. The position is excessively disagreeable. A man is extinguished. The light of his countenance is gone. He looks like a decapitated individual, feeling in his heart for the thoughts in his head.

By dint of some extraordinary and perfectly original wriggling, Bob eventually managed to appear ; and when he did so, he shook himself, and looked round fiercely ; but the gentlemen whom he had calculated upon seeing had vanished ; and it was, indeed, fortunate for them that they had ; for it may with perfect safety be recorded that, could he have grappled with them then, the irregularity of the features, of

one of them at least, would have been truly conspicuous.

In vain the lady declared that no die had been turned; in vain she pledged her honour that she never beheld those two gentlemen before in the whole course of her life. Bob would not believe her; and he told her so flatly, and rated her well, and put it plainly and distinctly to her whether she ought not to be ashamed of her conduct; which seemed to touch her rather, for she instantly observed that, as he was not exactly satisfied, she would consent to his having another throw gratis.

“Another throw!” cried Bob, with an expression of scorn; and he really was very much disgusted with her behaviour. “I’ll not have another throw! I’ll have nothing more to do with you. Now I know what you are, if I was to go for to win the smallest mite of your money I should think myself pisoned!”

And, hereupon, he quitted the spot with his friend.

He now clearly saw that the man who, being pecuniarily involved, seeks to retrieve himself by gambling, is a fool; and, having made an

exceedingly laudable resolution to profit by the experience he had purchased that day, he proceeded towards town, deeply buried in reflection, for how the cook was to be paid, and how his heavy half-and-half, ale, and brandy-and-water losses were to be settled, were mysteries which had still to be solved.

CHAPTER IV.

DESCRIBES THE PERFORMANCE OF A PHAETONIC
FEAT, WHICH BRINGS BOB INTO TEMPORARY
TROUBLE.

At the appointed hour the following morning, Stanley called upon Sir William, with a view to an arrangement of their books; and the result proved that Stanley had lost to Sir William about four thousand pounds, and had won of Major Foxe two thousand eight hundred. This to Stanley was a most unsatisfactory result. He, of course, knew before that he had lost; but he had certainly no idea of being a loser to the extent of twelve hundred pounds. He, however, appeared to care as little as possible about it; and when the honourable Baronet expressed his sorrow at

having won so much of him, he entreated him not to feel at all annoyed at that circumstance, which was perfectly supererogatory,—and begged of him to accompany him at once to the United Service, in order to assist in the settlement with Major Foxe. To this Sir William politely consented, and they repaired to the United Service, and inquired for Major Foxe of the porter. Major Foxe! Why, of course, he was not there! Of course they knew nothing of him!—of course he did not, and never did, belong to the Club!

“Why, surely the fellow could not have assumed that name to deceive us!” cried Stanley.

“He certainly said the United Service,” observed Sir William, who affected to be greatly surprised. “Is it possible, think you, that he meant the Junior United Service?”

“Oh! very likely! I thought he could not be quite so barefaced a scamp!”

They went to the Junior Club; he was not known there. They examined the Army List minutely; he was not to be found. In short, there was no Major Foxe in the service.

On making this discovery, Stanley said indeed but little; but Sir William, who had had just as lively an anticipation of the event as if he had actually been a confederate of the Major, denounced him with unexampled energy. He was a scoundrel, a blackleg, a villain, a swindler!—he was every thing, in fact, but an honourable man. Stanley, however, still preserved comparative silence; and, on returning to the Albany, left the indignant Baronet, having engaged to dine with him at seven.

Four thousand pounds! It was a large sum for him to lose, and that in one day! But the money must be paid: whether Major Foxe were or were not to be found, Sir William must have the amount he had won; and, being impressed with the necessity for an immediate settlement, Stanley proceeded to the house of the widow, whom he found in a pleasing reverie, recounting the delights she had experienced the preceding day.

“Mother,” said he, after the customary greeting, “you must let me have some money.”

“Very well, my love. Let me see, you had a cheque—when? However, you have not spent it unnecessarily, I dare say; but, if I give you another now, you must make it last a very long time; for you know we have both been extravagant of late.”

“I am sorry,” said Stanley, “to require so much at once; but I must have, mother, four thousand pounds.”

“Four thousand! Why—four—good gracious! my dear, what on earth can you want such a sum for?”

“To pay a debt of honour,” replied Stanley, with great calmness.

“What, did you lose four thousand pounds at the races? My dearest boy, to whom?”

“To Sir William,” said Stanley, and the countenance of the widow instantly changed.

Had it been lost to any one else, of course the thing would have been very different indeed; but as it was, why, what in her judgment did it amount to! It would be still in the family! It was not like an actual loss—it was only like taking money out of the right pocket, and putting it into the left. This she

felt, and hence her reply was, that certainly the money must be paid.

“But,” she added, “how came you, my dear boy, to bet to such an extent? For goodness’ sake, never bet again so largely. We shall be ruined—we shall indeed, if you continue to go on so. But I thought, my love, you won of Major—what’s his name?—Foxe—ay, Major Foxe?”

“So I did. I won two thousand eight hundred pounds of him, and lost four thousand to Sir William.”

“Oh! then the case is not so desperate! Then, if I give you twelve hundred pounds, that will do to settle all?”

“Is Sir William to wait till I get the money of the Major? Is he to suppose that I cannot pay him until the Major pays me?”

“Not for the world! No—he must be paid at once.”

“Of course; and when the Major settles with me, I’ll hand the amount over to you.”

“Exactly. That will be perfectly correct and straightforward. But I have not so much at the banker’s. Let me see—how can it be

managed? When do you meet Sir William again?"

"I have promised to dine with him to-day."

"Dear me! Then I must run away at once into the city. I'll be back by four o'clock. Call then, and you shall have it."

"Very well. But there is one thing you must promise me, mother, and that is, that you will not name a word of this to Amelia. It can do no good, and may make her unhappy, and I am sure you have no desire to do that."

"Certainly not. But you must promise me that you'll never, never bet so much again."

"I'll promise never to lose so much again, if I can possibly avoid it. But recollect, not a syllable to Amelia."

The widow assured him that she would not say a word, and they parted, and with an equal amount of satisfaction; for it must, in strict justice to the widow, be confessed that, while Stanley was pleased that he had got over it so well, she rejoiced in the opportunity of convincing Sir William that there was really about her something pecuniarily substantial,—an opportunity which she would not have failed to

embrace for five times the amount. She, therefore, went into the city with rather a light heart; although she did think that Stanley ought not to suppose that he was at liberty to launch into any extravagancies he pleased.

While Stanley was at home, waiting rather impatiently for the hour of four, Bob was occupied in baring his breast to Joanna, the gentle and affectionate cook. He conceived it, and very correctly, to be more regular and honourable to explain to her clearly the position in which he stood, not alone because she was his principal creditor, but because she had invariably treated him with great kindness, which he could not but feel, inasmuch as she deemed herself in duty bound to tyrannize over, if not, indeed, to trample upon, the rest of the servants, in order that the contrast might be rendered thereby the more striking. He therefore confided to her, at once, the chief features of his melancholy case; and, when all had been explained, he observed, with much feeling,

“Now, the bottom of it is, cook, I owe you two pound. I can pay you—just pay you—and I feel justifiable in settling with you first;

but if I do, I shan't have a individual copper for to pay my wet bets, which won't look the genteel thing exactly. Now I don't want, you see, to ask master to advance. I don't like it—it don't agree with my digestion. It's a delicate thing, and looks rotten ; consequentially, the point in embryo amounts to this—*do* you want this here two pound, you know, before my quarter's up ?”

“By no manner of means,” replied the gentle Joanna. “But why call me cook? You know I don't mind *you*, Robert, although I don't choose to condescend to suffer the rest to come any familiarities. But, in regard of this money, I request you'll not name it. If you was in wants of twenty times as much, I've got so much confidence in somebody, that I don't think that somebody would be very long without it. But how much do you say all these losings will come to ?”

“Why, I think three pound ten will about settle the lot.”

“And you've only two pound ?”

“Oh, but I can easy borrow the rest of old misseses coachman.”

“Borrow of nobody, Robert, but me. Don’t have too many creditors ; don’t let too many know how many secrets goes to an ounce. In the present deplorable state of the world it isn’t wise. Here’s thirty shillings ; that’ll make it up. Come !—you shall !—I insist ! If you want any more, why, you know where to make the application.”

This was kind—Bob could not but feel it to be very kind, while the confidence he had reposed in Joanna made her heart leap for joy ; for, although she had had recourse to every ingenious manœuvre, having a tendency in her eiew to convince him of the strength and virgin purity of her affection—although she had done, indeed, all that the delicacy of her nature could sanction, to inspire him with a perfect appreciation of the character of that vital spark with which she longed to set his heart in a blaze, she had never till then felt quite sure of success. She had, theretofore, conceived him to be excessively dull on this interesting subject, and that dulness had indisputably outraged, to a painful extent, her refined sensibilities ; but then, being conscious, not only that wealth

induced favour, but that favour was the legitimate germ of affection, she could not, nor did she, indeed, wish to disguise from herself, that in the garden of his heart she had planted this germ, and hence, fancying that she had but to cultivate it tenderly, proceeded to explain to him, with much poetic feeling, that she had a mass of money in one of the saving's banks to a highly respectable tune, and that she thought most sincerely, that such mass would go far towards enabling a comfortable couple to commence in the independent green grocery line, if, indeed, it would not, with the aid of a brewer, establish them at once in a public house of respectability, which formed, at that particular period, the very acme of her ambition. Of course Bob's opinions on this subject were bound to be strikingly coincident with her own; and although he did not understand her aim exactly, having no serious matrimonial feelings about him, he continued to converse with her on various matters which had indirect reference to those feelings, until Stanley again ordered the cab.

As the widow had been detained for some

time in the city, she had but just alighted from her carriage when Stanley arrived. She seemed to have been slightly put out about something, but she instantly gave him a cheque for the amount required.

“Why do you give me this thing?” cried Stanley, throwing the cheque down as if it were valueless. “Why could you not bring me the money?”

“A cheque, my love, looks more respectable—ininitely more respectable.”

“So it would, with my own name attached; but do you suppose I want the whole world to know that I have to run to you for all the money I want? Your own respectability, mother, you look at, not mine. If a cheque be an emblem of respectability, why not place me in a position to give cheques of my own? Here, it’s now half-past four, and I must go galloping down to the banker’s to get this thing cashed.”

“Surely that is unnecessary? What difference can it make?”

“What difference! Why, I would not let him see this on any account! I wish you had a little more thought for me, mother. If you

had, I think your affection would be much more conspicuous."

"Stanley!—indeed this is cruel! But you do not—you cannot really mean what you say. If you did, I should be wretched. My dearest boy! why are you so passionate? You'll break my heart!—I'm sure you'll break my heart, and then you *would* be very sorry, would you not? Yes, I know you would," she added, throwing her arms round his neck, and fondly kissing him, "my boy!"

He returned the kiss coldly, and quitted the room.

Now, the widow regretted all this very much: not only in consequence of Stanley's impetuosity, which she had in his childhood most culpably fostered, but because she had wished that particular cheque to pass through the hands of Sir William. However, as it was, she contented herself with the cherished conviction, that he would, nevertheless, understand and duly appreciate the source whence it came.

Having obtained the cash at the banker's, Stanley in due time proceeded to dine with Sir

William ; to whom, immediately after dinner—they being quite alone—he cheerfully paid the amount.

Sir William affected to receive it with great reluctance.

“ Upon my honour,” said he, “ I am ashamed to take it of you. I am, indeed.”

“ Ridiculous !” cried Stanley. “ The sum is nothing ; and you must not ‘ lay the flattering unction to your soul’ that I am not going to have my revenge.”

Sir William was pleased to hear that in Stanley’s estimation, the amount was inconsiderable. He was also pleased to hear him speak of having his revenge : still he appeared to be most unwilling to receive it.

“ I do not,” he observed, “ care a straw about winning any amount of a number of friends ; but I cannot bear to win so much of one. However, as you insist upon my receiving it, I also must insist upon being allowed to make your amiable wife a present.”

“ Nonsense ! nonsense !” cried Stanley. “ I beg you will do nothing of the sort.”

“ Then, by Heavens ! I’ll not have the

money at all. I may be called a curious fellow, and perhaps I am ; but this isn't quite congenial with a certain sort of principle, or feeling, I have about me."

" Why, suppose I had won it of you,—do you think *I* would not have received it ?"

" Not with pleasure. I am sure of it. I know you too well. At all events I'll do what I say. You can but call me out ; and, although I'm not much of a shot, I'll back myself to fire in the air on such an occasion with any man in England."

Stanley smiled. He had now a much better opinion of Sir William than ever ; and, as both were well satisfied, they kept up a spirited, merry conversation, their full flow of pleasure being interrupted only when Major Foxe happened to be named ; on which occasions Sir William invariably felt himself in honour bound to swell with indignation.

At eleven o'clock precisely, Bob, according to instructions, drove up to the south entrance of the Albany, where he waited with the most exemplary patience till twelve, and then fell asleep, and dreamt of his prospects till one,

when the arrival of Stanley and Sir William, both of whom were somewhat heated with wine, had the effect of making him leap out of the cab, and to rush to the horse's head, before his eyes were in a positively strict sense open.

"You may as well jump in," said Stanley, on taking the reins.

"Oh, with all my heart," returned Sir William. "The air is refreshing. I'll see you home, and then walk back coolly."

He accordingly at once took his seat, and they started, turning the corner as if some great principle impelled the near wheel to graze the glove of a person whose hand was on the lamp post.

"I'll bet ten to one," said Sir William, on reaching the Circus, "that you don't drive through the Quadrant at full gallop, without touching the pillars on the one side, or the shutters on the other."

"What, on the foot-path there under the piazza, do you mean?"

"Of course."

"Safe bet," said Stanley, who continued to drive on.

“ Well, I’ll tell you what I’ll do with you, safe as it is: I’ll take ten to one that I do it.”

“ Done !” cried Stanley.

“ In fifties ?”

“ Ay, in fifties. But the people !”

“ Oh, I’ll very soon clear the course. You’ll see how they’ll all fly before us !”

They now changed places. Stanley gave up the reins, and Sir William drove back to the Circus.

“ Now, then,” said he, “ sit firm. Never mind the screams of the women. Hold hard, Bob ! Yo-oicks ! yo-oicks ! tally-ho !” he shouted, driving in by Swan and Edgar’s shop. “ Yoi ! yoi ! yoi ! yoi !—toloo, toloo there !—yoi ! yoi !”

And away they dashed, while the women were shrieking, and the men were groaning, and the police were running from all directions. At starting, the horse was somewhat frightened, and seemed half inclined to bolt out of the course ; but as his reckless driver kept a tight rein, while continuing to shout as if Reynard had been in sight, he went on without a slip,

although the flag-stones were nearly as smooth as glass. The task was nearly completed. Stanley's five hundred seemed scarcely worth a shilling's purchase. They had but to pass a few more pillars, and they were out.

"Keep on, sir! keep on!" shouted Bob.
"The police!"

This sufficiently startled the hair-brained Baronet to cause him, in his efforts to turn sharp into the road, to graze the base of the last pillar and thus to lose.

The angry exclamation which followed convinced Bob that Stanley had given up the reins. He cared, however, nothing for Sir William's anger then, but instantly pulled back the hood to give instructions. The people behind were still groaning with indignation, and the police were still running with great ferocity.

"Keep on, sir! keep on, sir!" cried Bob.
"He can do more than that! We shan't beat 'em! There's one on 'em now at our heels in a cab! Take the reins—take the reins, sir!" he added, addressing Stanley, "and then the Prince won't be frightened. That's right, sir!"

Keep on, sir! Go right into the New Road, and then we'll dodge 'em."

"Can you see them now, Bob?" cried Stanley, on reaching the Crescent.

"Oh, yes, sir! they're just behind us, cutting away as if they hadn't another minute to live. Now to the right, sir! I know every inch of the ground."

Guided by Bob, Stanley went to the right, and in a short time turned to the right again, and then dashed through an infinite variety of streets, turning to the left and right alternately, until they reached Tottenham-court-road, although long before that Bob felt sure of having effectually eluded their official pursuer.

"Well, Bob, which way now?" inquired Stanley.

"Oh, any way you like, sir, now. You can walk the Prince, if you like, sir. They've given up the chase. But I beg pardon, sir, but if I was you, I'd never try that there dodge again. It's a mercy we wasn't all smashed—and I'm sure we knocked some on 'em down. It's a regular miracle the Prince didn't bolt!"

Sir William laughed heartily at this, not-

withstanding he had lost ; but Stanley, although he had won, felt that Bob was quite right, and was about to confess that justice had nothing to do with their escape, when the horse's head was suddenly seized by a policeman.

“ Stand aside !” cried Stanley. “ *Let go your hold !*”

“ Not a bit of it !” cried the policeman, who still held on, until Bob, who had leaped from behind on the instant, threw his coat into the cab, and demanded an explanation.

“ What do you mean ?” he exclaimed. “ Get away from my horse ! Don't you see he don't like you ? What do you want ? Do you hear ? *Stand away !*” And he seized the policeman ; who, finding the horse becoming unmanageable, relinquished the reins, and at once secured *him*.

Stanley was now about to leap from the cab, but Sir William restrained him, and, as at the moment Bob shouted, “ Drive on, sir !—drive on ! There's more of 'em coming, sir ! Never mind me, sir ! Drive on !” he somewhat reluctantly gave the horse his head, and dashed away.

Bob made no resistance : nor would he allow the calmness of his spirit to be ruffled ; albeit two other policemen came up at the time, and handled him with something like ferocity.

“ Behave,” said he “ a leetle near the mark, and I’ll walk like a gentleman. *I* don’t want to cut away from you. It’s no odds to me ! If you wasn’t to go for to hold me at all, I’d walk with you as regular as a lamb.”

On this particular point the incredulity of the policemen was rather remarkable. They still held him tightly, and continued to hold him until they arrived at the station, when they placed him behind a piece of wood yclept the bar, and proceeded to introduce him to the notice of the inspector, who, while disposing of a mouthful of a cold mutton pie, looked at him with supreme official dignity.

“ Well,” said the inspector, having listened with peculiar attention to the merits of the case, as portrayed in the opening address, which was somewhat poetical, “ and who is your master ?”

Bob with great deliberation passed his hand over his chin, and said, “ Why——”

“ Do you hear me ! Who is your master ? We are not going to let you stand hatching a lot of lies. Who is he ? What’s his name ? Where does he live ? ”

“ Why,” replied Bob, who was still unruffled, “ under all the circumstantialia of the case, I don’t know, you see, exact, that I should be regular justifiable——”

“ None of your long speeches here. It won’t do. Again I ask, who is your master ? ”

“ You see,” returned Bob, with an appropriate gesture, “ it’s a delicate pint when you look at it deliberate ! Reely I don’t think it would become me to tell, do you know ! ”

“ But you must tell ! That’s all about it.”

“ Well, if I *must*, why the fact of the matter is, I must. There can’t be two opinions, anyhow, about that ; but it somehow or another strikes me forcible that I’ve heard a old saying, which says, you can take a horse to water, but you can’t make him drink. Now, that’s a perdicament : and, it just occurs to my magination that, if I make up my mind that I won’t tell, I won’t ; and, as true as I’m alive,

I can't see how you can make me tell legally by law, although, no doubt, such things was done in the days of sanguinary Mary."

"What are you chattering about?" demanded the inspector, who conceiving his authority to be in some degree contemned, began to be really very angry. "Do you mean to say that you'll *not* tell me who your master is?"

"Why I don't mean to say that I won't; nor I don't mean to say that I will; I was only just a-argufying the pint, which seems to me to be rayther knotty."

"It'll be all the worse for you, young fellow! Now, do you mean to tell me, or don't you?"

"I don't see how I *can*, without cutting the throat of that confidence, which ought——"

"Yes, or no! We've had quite enough jabbering. Will you tell me, or not?"

Excuse me. Not to-night. I must turn the matter over in my mind."

"Lock him up!" cried the inspector,—
"lock him up!" And, after having as quietly as a dove undergone the operation of having

his pockets emptied—the necessity for which, however, he could not then exactly comprehend—he was conducted from the bar into the yard, and introduced into one of the cells.

As far as the abstract process of locking-up was concerned, this met his views precisely; he expected to be locked up; as a matter of course, he expected that; but he did not expect to be introduced into a cell crowded with persons, of whom the majority were in a state of the most bestial intoxication, yet such was the fact. Some were snoring, some were singing, and some were swearing, while the effluvium which prevailed, was not remarkable for its fragrance. Bob felt that this ought not to be. He understood, of course, then, why his pockets had been emptied; but he did think the practice of thrusting all sorts of characters into a place of this kind, indiscriminately, was one which never ought to have obtained. He, however, resolved to make himself as comfortable as the circumstances—of which some were peculiarly unpleasant—would permit; and, having discussed certain interesting points with his conscience, he fell

asleep, and slept soundly till the clock struck nine. He was then aroused by the policeman who had charge of the cell; and who, being a decent man in his way, did, with great consideration, procure him some breakfast, which Bob enjoyed much, and then waited with patience till the hour arrived, at which he and the rest were escorted to the office.

In this procession he had the precedence; and he had scarcely left the door of the station, when a stranger placed a coat into his hands, and walked away without uttering a word. Bob recognised the coat in an instant. It was a frock-coat. He had brushed it, he knew not how oft, nor did he care. He put it on with alacrity, and the fit was undeniable.

“Is that your own coat?” inquired the policeman who did him the honour to keep by his side.

“No; the buttons of my own coats tells tales,” replied Bob.

“Your master, I suppose, sent it?”

“He who sent it is a trump, and nothing but!” cried Bob, who was proud of the coat, and felt happy. “All right!” said he to him-

self, in a confidential whisper. "Ain't it a blessing to have a master that's grateful? He don't care about me! What a *pity* he don't!" Hereupon, Bob winked with peculiar significance, and entered the office with a tranquil mind.

Nearly an hour elapsed before his case was called on; and although during the whole of that time he was perfectly self-possessed, on being placed at the bar, and called "prisoner," he certainly did feel in some slight degree confused. As the case, however, proceeded, his nerves recovered their wonted tone; and when the charge had been made, he pulled down his waistcoat, and held up his head with the air of a man conscious of having a great duty to perform.

"Now," said the magistrate, "what have you to say to all this?"

"Please your worship," said Bob, "it wasn't a act of mine. It wasn't me that drove at all through the Quadrant."

"We know that; but what do you say to the charge of having obstructed the police in the execution of their duty?"

“ Why, please your worship, what could I do? I didn’t want to hurt nobody. I’m sure I’m of a peaceful dispensation enough; but, when I knew that the police wanted for to collar my master, how *could* I stand that? Suppose you was my master, what *would* you think of me if I suffered you to be taken? *Would* it be at all the ticket? *Wouldn’t* you think it unpopular and rotten ingratitude? I rayther think you would, your worship, reely, if you only just put it to yourself in that predicament, and argue the matter cool.”

The magistrate smiled, and again consulted the police-sheet, and then said, “ Let me see : what do you say your master’s name is?”

“ I beg your worship’s pardon, but I didn’t say at all.”

“ Well, what is his name ?”

“ Why, your worship, you’ll obleedge me by not asking ; you will, upon my word ; ’cause I don’t want to tell any falsity, and I ain’t justifiable in speaking the truth.”

“ But we must know.”

“ Well, now, reely ; I bow, of course, respectfully to your worship ; but, if you look at

the thing in the right light, as a pint of principle, I don't think that if I was to tell, you'd believe that I'd any principality in me."

The magistrate tried to look grave, but the thing was a failure. He did, however, say, with great apparent severity :

"What if I were to send you to prison, sir, and keep you there until you did tell us?"

"I hope your worship will think better of of it," said Bob. "It ain't as if I'd done a single ha'p'orth of injury; nor it ain't as if it was me, you know, as drove upon the pavement, which, if I must speak the sentiments of my mind, is a thing I wouldn't think of doing myself; and, though the law may say I didn't ought to have touched the police, but ought rayther to have assisted him in collaring of master, your worship will see that such a law is right clean against Nature; 'cause if I'd a-done that, I should a-hated myself regular: I couldn't a been off it."

"You are fined five pounds," said the Magistrate; "and tell your master, from me, that his conduct is disgraceful."

Bob bowed ; and as he left the bar a solicitor, whom Stanley had engaged to watch the case, placed in his hand the required sum, with which the fine was duly paid, and he was at once set at liberty. Sir William, who although unperceived by him, had been in the office, now presented him with a sovereign ; and as on reaching home, Stanley made him a present of five, he could not but feel that Fortune, smiling sweetly upon him, had designed the whole thing with no other view than that of getting him out of those pecuniary embarrassments, in which he had been so deeply and so painfully involved.

CHAPTER V.

THE RECONCILIATION.

THE efforts of General Johnson to effect a reconciliation, had been so perfectly successful, that he called, on the morning of the event just recorded, to invite Stanley and Amelia to a quiet family dinner, gently hinting that they were not to feel in the slightest degree amazed if they met certain persons whom they honoured. The intimation was, of course, in an instant understood; and nothing ever surpassed the fervid, heart-stirring eloquence with which Amelia poured forth her thanks. The General, although overjoyed at having accomplished his object, could scarcely refrain from shedding tears. Every word touched his feelings as a father; every sentence went directly to his heart. Nor was Stanley unmoved. With all his faults, he loved Amelia most fondly. He

could not bear to see her afflicted. He might be thoughtless ; he might neglect her—and his neglect was attributable to thoughtlessness alone : but a gentle tear from her would wound him more than the most severe reproof that could be uttered. In this instance, he knew that her tears were distilled from a feeling of joy ; yet he could not endure them ; and, as all his serious efforts to check them failed, he had recourse to that species of irony, which tends to make troubles seem less, by virtue of painting them greater than they are.

“ My love,” said he, “ this is indeed a dreadful day. Can the General be really a friend, to bring this great calamity upon us ? What the result of his polite invitation may be, one can’t think ; but is it not your impression that it ought to break our hearts ? Come, come, you silly girl ! You should smile, not weep. Tears should be tolerated only with troubles ; they should never be permitted to dim a happy prospect : General, should they ? ”

“ You are a good fellow, sir,” said the General, pressing his hand. “ I admire you, sir. You have an angel for a wife, and you know it.”

“ Yes,” said Stanley, playfully, “ she is very fair, considering. Her government is, however, extremely tyrannous.”

“ That’s right—quite right: keep a tight rein, my girl, and then he may do. He is a wild young dog, and requires to be looked sharply after. However, if you mind what you are about, I think it possible that the favourable opinion I have formed of his character, will be lasting.”

“ General,” said Stanley, “ for the interest you have taken in Amelia, accept my warmest thanks. She is a good girl; and I cannot but think, that for her sake, the Captain might have felt himself justified in meeting us before.”

“ My dear Stanley !” said Amelia.

“ Do you want to spoil all?” cried the General. “ Not another word on that subject. Take my advice. But I’ll leave him in your hands,” he added, addressing Amelia. “ You must instruct him that the less he says about that the better. Adieu! Remember six. Depend upon it all will be well.”

The General then left; and the moment he had done so, Amelia commenced her task of

prevailing upon Stanley to say nothing displeasing to her father—a task which she accomplished with ease.

“For your sake, my dearest girl,” said he, affectionately, “I will on that point be silent. I, of course, perceive that it might produce an unpleasant feeling, and will, therefore, not indulge in a single word.”

From this time, until six, Amelia was lost in contemplation. She endeavoured to think herself happy, but her happiness was then most imperfect. Her feelings of delight were mingled with those of apprehension, both struggling for the mastery, but neither gaining the ascendant.

When the time for their departure had arrived she became still more nervous. The blood left her cheeks, and she trembled with violence on the carriage being announced. Stanley tried with the most affectionate zeal to cheer her. He strove to convince her that her father’s object was not to inflict an additional wound upon her feelings, but to heal that which his anger had already adduced. Still she dreaded to meet him, and became so tremulous

on reaching the General's residence that she had scarcely sufficient strength to alight.

“Courage—courage, my dear girl!” cried Stanley, as he placed her arm in his, and led her gently into the house. “You are not my Amelia to-day!”

Another effort was made to assume an air of calmness, and they were received with the most cheering warmth. Miss Johnson, with the familiar love of a sister, took Amelia at once under her own especial care, and exerted her enlivening influence with some degree of success. Stanley was under the command of the General, who marched him into the library, and remained to entertain him until Captain and Mrs. Joliffe arrived, when he introduced the lady into the library, and conducted the Captain at once into the drawing-room, to which Amelia had been led by her affectionate friend.

The very moment the Captain entered, Amelia flew into his arms, which were extended to receive her; but for some moments neither had the power to speak. She sobbed convulsively, while the big tears rolled down his

cheeks as he kissed her, and fondly pressed her again and again to his heart.

“ My girl !” he cried, at length, “ my own dear girl !—for dear you are still to me, my child, nay, dearer than ever. Look up, my love ! Kiss me—no more sadness now.”

“ Dear papa !” cried Amelia, in tones the most touching. “ You will forgive me, papa ? Pray, forgive me ?”

“ I do from my heart !—from my soul ! Bless you !—bless you both !—be happy !”

A fresh flood of tears was the only rejoinder Amelia could make ; and as her father with the most affectionate tenderness led her to the sofa, the General, who had laid his whole plan, went for Stanley and Mrs. Joliffe, with whom he speedily returned ; and while Amelia was being caressed by the latter, the Captain was shaking the former cordially by the hand, thereby perfectly realizing the conception of the General, who felt that his task was complete.

Amelia was now most happy. Restored to those who, from her earliest infancy had cherished and loved her most fondly, her heart was filled with that pure joy whose natural element is silence.

During dinner not a syllable was uttered having reference, even remotely, to the cause of their meeting that day. They appeared to be afraid to speak, lest they should happen to drop a word which could be supposed to apply to it. Miss Johnson, however, did eventually go so far as to explain how excessively disappointed she had been on ascertaining that Stanley was married, inasmuch as, in the event of his having been single, what the consequence of her rescue might have been she really could not at all pretend to tell. Upon which Stanley condoled with her in the most happy vein, and she was rallied on the subject by all but Amelia, whose heart was too full to allow her to join them.

The ladies retired early, and their retirement appeared to be the signal for silence. This part of the business seemed to have been altogether forgotten by the General ; he had, at all events, omitted to include it in his plan. He now saw that the grand subject must of necessity be alluded to in some way ; and while he was considering which ought to speak first, Stanley and the Captain were waiting anxiously for each

other to begin. At length, the General, by dint of much reasoning—for he remembered no precedent by which he could be guided,—safely arrived at the conclusion that they both expected him to break the ice; and, as he could not clearly recognise any incorrectness in such a course, he replenished his glass, and resolved to pursue it.

“Well,” said he, having taken a deep inspiration, “you understand each other perfectly now, I presume? You consent to receive this desperate young gentleman, and he, in return, consents to act so as to render his alliance a source of pleasure to all concerned. Is it not so?”

“That seems to be implied,” said the Captain. “But I have to make one stipulation, which is, that as I have certain scruples on the subject, we must have this marriage celebrated according to the rites of the Church of England, and in an English church. You will consent to this?” he added, addressing Stanley.

“With pleasure,” replied Stanley. I shall be happy in any way to meet your views.”

“Then, from this hour, not a single word

on the subject which caused our estrangement shall ever escape my lips. All shall be as if I had given my consent in the first instance; and nothing that I can do to promote the happiness of you both shall be left undone."

"Excellent!" cried the General. "When is it to be?"

"As early as you please," replied Stanley, "perhaps the sooner the better."

"Well, then, let me see," said the Captain, "to-morrow is Saturday—the licence can be procured in the morning. Suppose we say Monday? The thing can be confined to ourselves, and we can all dine at Richmond, and be happy. Shall it be so?"

Stanley at once consented, and the preliminaries were discussed and satisfactorily arranged; and when the arrangement was communicated to Amelia, she experienced the truest, the purest delight.

CHAPTER VI.

IN WHICH STANLEY AND AMELIA ARE MARRIED
AGAIN.

INSPIRED with most joyous feelings, Amelia early the next morning began to prepare for her second marriage. Her pleasure being perfectly unalloyed with those delicate apprehensions, which, under circumstances of an ordinary character, are inseparable from the contemplation of marriage, was of the purest conceivable caste. Her spirits were high; her heart was light; while Stanley, in order to increase her joy, addressed her throughout the day as Miss Joliffe, wooed her zealously, proposed to her with playful formality, and spoke of the morrow as the day on which their connubial felicity was to commence. This, of course, could not fail to impart ad-

ditional delight to her who appreciated highly every kind word and look. She felt, indeed, truly happy; and the manifestation of that happiness proved that his influence over her heart was complete.

As the widow had been the previous evening informed that Captain Joliffe and his lady considered her presence at the ceremony indispensable, she too, was excessively busy all the morning, being firmly resolved to create a favourable first impression,—a resolution which invariably rendered the undertaking immense. By virtue of great perseverance, however, she on this occasion did achieve the preliminary object in view with comparative tranquillity and ease, and that, moreover, so early, that after having poured an additional stream of instructions into the comprehensive mind of her maid—who, when anything unusual occurred, always had a fine time of it—she entered her carriage with the view of dining with Stanley and Amelia, as proposed.

On her arrival she was introduced in due form to “Miss Joliffe,” with the idea of

which the widow was extremely amused, and she entered into the spirit of the thing with much pleasure, and dwelt with considerable point upon the chief characteristics of the position of the married lovers; which, she contended, was rather peculiar, and backed her views on the subject with much argumentative matter, which had the effect of inducing considerable mirth.

On dinner being announced, a small packet was delivered to Stanley, containing an elegant suite of pearls, the promised present of Sir William to Amelia. Stanley opened it; read the note by which it was accompanied, and then put them both into his pocket, where they remained till after dinner, when he rose, and, having produced them, said,

“My dear Miss Joliffe, I have the almost inexpressible pleasure to inform you that an honourable baronet, whom you hold in respect, and whom my mother very highly esteems—”

“Nay—nay,” interrupted the widow, who blushed very deeply,—“nay, that is not fair now, is it, my love?”

“I beg that I may not be interrupted,”



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said Stanley, who then resumed, "I have, I say, the pleasure to announce that an honourable baronet has deputed me to present to you a case of pearls, your acceptance of which——"

"Oh! do let us look!" exclaimed the widow. "Pray open them! Do, there's a dear!"

"What is the use of my rising to make a brilliant speech," cried Stanley, "if my eloquence is to be murdered by these unseemly interruptions. The opposition is factious. But I pity you—I pity you both; and as I find that you cannot appreciate pure eloquence; as I find that you hold it, in the plenitude of your ignorance—which is dense—to be far less brilliant and attractive than the eloquence of jewels, I scorn to enlighten the minds of such unintellectual ingrates, and therefore at once resume my seat with an appropriate contempt for the gross character of your taste."

"What dears!" exclaimed the widow, totally deaf to the affected indignation of Stanley. "How excessively elegant! And those drops! Dear me, how sweetly pretty! Well now,

really! Do pearls become you, my love? Oh! yes; I should say so. And, then, how very—very chaste and quiet! But you do not seem to think so much of them as I do?”

“Oh! indeed I admire them exceedingly,” said Amelia. “But, is it not singular that Sir William should have made me a present of them?”

“Do not inquire of me,” replied Stanley. “I was about to explain all, when I was disgracefully interrupted; but now, why, of course, you cannot expect——”

“Yes, please,” said Amelia; “do, there’s a good creature! I know you will to oblige me, will you not?”

“Why, as a favour thus specially solicited, I scarcely know how to refuse. But I protest against the exercise of this species of influence. There never was a man so much influenced by his wife as I am by mine, that is to be. It really is monstrous. I have nothing like a will of my own. I am governed as completely as an absolute slave. I submit to it now for the last time. You will understand, madam, that to-morrow I revolt.”

“Nay, that will be cruel,” said Amelia,

who always enjoyed the idea of his being governed by her. "To-morrow will be my own day."

"Another case of tyranny! Well, I'll give you to-morrow; but after to-morrow I shall assume my natural dignity as a man! Now with regard to these pearls, Sir William happened to win a little money of me at Epsom; which money he declared that he would not receive, unless I allowed him to make you a present. I repudiated the notion, of course; but eventually, in order to induce him to take it, I tacitly consented, and, behold the result!"

"Well, really! Oh! how very honourable!" cried Amelia. "Do you believe that if you had not consented he would not have received this money at all?"

"I believe this," said Stanley, "that if he had received it he would have made you a present, whether my consent had been obtained, or not."

"Well it, at all events, proves him to be a man of strict principle. It is really a very elegant present! But I scarcely know how I am to thank him."

At this moment a servant entered with a packet of about the same size, addressed to Amelia, which she opened, and proceeded to read a note it contained, while the widow and Stanley re-examined the pearls.

It is probably remarkable that the widow on this occasion was not in such raptures as she might have been, considering. It is true, she was pleased at the manifestation of that honourable principle by which she had ever supposed Sir William to be actuated; still she did feel, and strongly, that, if the pearls had been presented to *her*, it would have been a different thing altogether; and so it would.

“My dearest girl!” cried Stanley, on perceiving the tears in Amelia’s eyes, “what has happened?”

Amelia handed him the note, which he read, and then exclaimed,

“Well, this is truly dreadful! The Captain,” he added, addressing the widow with great solemnity, has presented Amelia with a set of brilliants to wear to-morrow! Now, isn’t that appalling? Return them, my love: by all means send them back. Do not keep

them, on any account. I wouldn't have them for the world. It's quite shocking!"

Amelia smiled through her tears, which were those of pure affection, and having kissed the case fervently, displayed the sparkling gems. The pearls were, of course, in an instant eclipsed. Had the brilliants been but paste, they would in her view have thrown *them* at once into the shade; but, as they were in reality brilliants, her delight was unbounded, and she viewed them with pride.

And then, the widow. Oh! nothing in her judgment could surpass them in beauty. She had a set it was true, but they were not to be compared, in point of splendour, with those. Still, she must say, that she greatly preferred sapphires herself, and announced it distinctly to be her settled conviction that, if she were ever again tempted to make a purchase of the kind, lovely sapphires would be chosen; they were so dazzling—so strikingly dazzling! they were *dears*!

Of course she and Amelia, impatient as they both were to witness the effect of these jewels, soon after this retired; and immediately

they had done so, Stanley, who well knew the widow's feelings, and who had watched the emotions these presents had induced, left the house, and having purchased a suite of sapphires, and requested them to be addressed to his mother, and sent to her residence forthwith, returned with so much expedition, that neither the widow nor Amelia had the slightest knowledge of his having been out.

Now, in history, both ancient and modern, coincidences are recorded of a strange and remarkable character; but it is extremely questionable whether one can be found upon record more strange or more remarkable than this, that at the moment these sapphires were being delivered at the door of the widow's residence, a bandbox arrived at the door of Stanley's. This bandbox—to which nothing in the recognised annals of bandboxes comparable in point of dimensions exists,—did produce a most extraordinary sensation. It was addressed to Joanna, and highly ingenious and conflicting were the conjectures which sprang from her utter inability to tell who had sent it, and what it contained. She did, however, eventually

raise the lid, and with joy beheld a bonnet of deep interest, and of the Tuscan order of architecture, powerfully trimmed. Oh ! with what rapture she gazed at its shape ; with what exalted satisfaction she guessed what, in its native nakedness, it cost,—fixed mentally the price of the ribbon per yard, and dwelt intensely upon the texture of the curtain behind. But, who on earth could have sent it ? *That* she naturally held to be a highly-important question ; but the mystery in which it was involved was so dark, that in her view it seemed to defy all solution. She laboured to solve it zealously ; she taxed her teeming memory, and racked her rich imagination to the utmost, but in vain ; it appeared to be utterly impossible to be done, and she was just about to give the thing up in despair, when she was struck with an idea that it was Bob. But then she considered that Bob had no money. She, notwithstanding, turned and looked at him as he sat with his right elbow resting upon the back of his chair, and his forefinger placed upon his temple, while his merry eyes twinkled with pleasurable pride ; and, as she looked, she saw *that* in his

expression, which induced her on the impulse of the moment to exclaim, "Oh ! Robert, it was you !"—when, as Bob did not deny the soft impeachment, but, on the contrary, smiled and seemed delighted, she flew to him, and thanked him, and shook his hand warmly, and could have kissed him, but didn't.

In the midst of our errors how frequently does it occur that we are correct ; and when we are, how refreshing is the conviction ! how pleasurable—how beautiful are the feelings of which that conviction is the germ ! It is true—too true that, by virtue of some inscrutable perversion of judgment, we often delude ourselves into the belief that we are right when we are wrong ; but this wasn't the case with Joanna. She was perfectly correct. Bob did buy the bonnet ; and had sent it, in order to mark as strongly as possible his sense of her politeness—a fact of which she no sooner became quite conscious than she was amazed !—overjoyed, but amazed !

"I hope," she observed, when her pulse had subsided to about eighty,—“I sincerely hope you haven't been a-borrowing of money for to make me this beautiful present ?”

“Not a bit,” replied Bob—“not a bit. I’m in funds of my own.”

This created another mystery in the mind of Joanna. How he had become possessed of these funds she really could not conceive. It was, in her gentle judgment, most strange. It was so sudden.

At length Bob, who had some knowledge of human nature as developed in the deep recesses of respectable kitchens, perceiving that her native curiosity had been awakened, said, “You wonder, I dare say, now, where I got this money; and it’s natural. But I don’t mind telling of you candid. It’s presents. Sir William gave me one sov., and master—which is a grateful trump—give me five.”

“Indeed! Well, you know, I’m never curious, and so, of course, I’m not at all ambitious to know; but what could they possibly have made you such handsome presents for?”

Bob’s notions of honour were high; and as, by the code which he recognised, he felt himself bound to keep his master’s secrets faithfully within his own breast, he replied that he trusted that she would look at the thing

strictly in the right light when he informed her, that the implied obligation he was under not to explain, he held to be sacred.

“Well, of course,” said Joanna, “I’ve no right to ask, nor I don’t very particular wish to know; but I hope that this isn’t a reward for the disguisement of any clandestine intrigue? I mean, I hope, there’s no lady in the case?”

“Why, you don’t for a minute suppose such a thing?”

“Why, no, I don’t suppose that it is so; only, *if* it is, missis ought to know it. You know nothing of that kind, Robert, ought to be kept away from her!”

“Don’t injure your health upon that score; there’s nothing of the sort: not a bit of it. Besides is it likely? I should like to see her which could come up to missis. *I* never see one, and I’ve seen a few in my time. Why there’s more of the lady in her little finger than there is in the whole bodies of your fine flashy dames, which depends upon di’monds and paint. Mark my words, they’ll never cut *her* out and try *all* they know. She’d be the one for my money, if I was a gentleman. She’s

my fancy all over. Just the lady I should choose."

Joanna expressed the highest admiration of his taste, which she did not, however, in reality, entertain, for the points of resemblance between her and Amelia—if any, indeed, could be said to exist—were neither numerous nor striking. Still, as Bob had thus set up his standard, she resolved to look into the matter closely, and proceeded at once to ascertain the extent to which they resembled each other; and, albeit, she could not but feel that she had in some respects the advantage over her mistress, she arrived that very night at the conclusion that she was bound, as a matter of justice to herself, to look as much like her as possible.

The next morning, at ten precisely, the widow, Captain and Mrs. Joliffe, General and Miss Johnson, and Albert, who had been summoned from Cambridge, arrived at Stanley's to breakfast; and the great feature of this meeting was the presentation of the widow to Amelia's family and friends. She had never, of course been introduced to them before; and while to her the introduction was a source of

great pleasure, they were manifestly struck by her appearance, which was singularly brilliant, if not, indeed, blazing. She had been a handsome, and was even then an extremely fine woman ; her features were regular and bold ; and, although she possessed not that elegance of manner which in them was so conspicuous, her presence was attractive and even commanding. The impression which she made was most favourable ; they were all highly pleased with her, and paid her great attention, which naturally caused her to be highly pleased with them. It was, in short, an extremely joyous party, and nothing but happiness prevailed.

At eleven, according to the arrangement made by the Captain, they went to church ; and as Amelia entered with her father, she burst into tears, and clung closely to him, and looked at him imploringly, as if she feared that she had been guilty of a greater offence than that involved in disobedience. He tried to cheer her ; he pressed her hand and kissed her ; and—understanding her feelings—sought to impress upon her mind that she had in reality been married ; but his efforts to raise her spirits

were but slightly successful. She was deeply affected, and continued to be so during the ceremony, the solemnity of which contrasted strongly with the highly reprehensible levity, which marked its performance at Gretna, until Stanley, her soul's idol, repeated his solemn promise to love and to cherish her with an emphasis which produced a thrill of joy.

Immediately after the ceremony they started for Richmond. Stanley and Amelia were in the General's chariot alone; and while the rest were engaged in lauding him to the skies, he was endeavouring to inspire her with cheerfulness and spirit.

"I scarcely know," said he, having partially accomplished this object, "how I am to get you through the world, you sad, sensitive creature! You have no courage at all."

"I have no apprehension while with you," she replied; "because I feel, nay, I know, that you will regard my want of courage as an additional claim to your protection. O Stanley! my dearest love, I am *so* happy!—so very, very happy!—you cannot conceive *how* happy I am!"

Stanley pressed her to his heart, and held her there in silence until they arrived at the home of her infancy, when her earliest, her sweetest recollections rushed upon her, and filled her heart with rapture. It was the first time, of course, that she had been there since the elopement, and her feelings on alighting from the carriage were delightful in the extreme. Her favourite Italian greyhound, that had been pining during the absence of his gentle mistress, knew her in an instant, and bounded with joy, while the servants, by whom she had ever been beloved, welcomed her back with pure and heartfelt pleasure. She then ran about the house like a child; tried the tones of her harp; struck a few chords upon her piano; looked into all the rooms, and gave a hasty glance at everything with which she had been familiar, until she was summoned to partake of the delicious repast that had been provided, when she rejoined the happy party, but almost immediately afterwards drew Stanley into the garden, where they walked, like children, hand in hand.

The widow and Mrs. Joliffe were insepa-

rable. They were indeed quite delighted with each other, for each met the other's views upon every point, but more especially upon that which had reference to the manly bearing and noble spirit of Stanley. They kept themselves aloof from the rest, their discourse being essentially private and confidential; and while they were engaged in establishing the fact that every mild, gentle, amiable creature ought to have a high-toned man of spirit for a husband, the General and the Captain were settling the point that an amiable, devoted, and affectionate wife, was the only thing calculated to keep a high-spirited young dog within bounds.

As for Albert, and the lively Miss Johnson, they were completely shut out from all confidence; and hence, perceiving that they were not in reality wanted, the groom was ordered to saddle the horses, and they started for a ride.

Thus appropriately paired, the party continued to be separated till seven, when they sat down to a most *recherché* dinner, but still more *recherché* was the chaste wit which gave it a zest, and which imparted to all the highest possible pleasure.

Miss Johnson was at all times brilliant, but never more so than when she happened to be assailed. She enjoyed it exceedingly; but would give no quarter: she would never allow her assailant to retreat: if unable to compete with her, she would extinguish him utterly; and to this may be attributed the fact of her being unmarried at the age of thirty-five; for, although she was beautiful, interesting, amiable, and intelligent, and could boast of having had an immense number of suitors, her irony withered the vanity of fools, while it induced wise men to pause, with the view of considering what effect it might have upon connubial bliss. She had thus scared them all, and was then free as air; but her heart was as light as that element still. On this occasion the General commenced an attack, and most unmercifully, on the ground of her being still a spinster; but she defended her position with surpassing spirit, and was on the point of obtaining a signal triumph, when the Captain came up with his artillery, which the gallant Stanley held to be unfair, and therefore sought to enlist under her banners; but she drove him into the opposite ranks as one of the enemy, and fought

them all, and that in a style which was productive of infinite mirth.

In conformity with the telegraphed wish of the Captain—who had previously engaged the widow for the first set of quadrilles, and bade them hold themselves in readiness, as he and the General were resolved to have a dance—the ladies retired unusually early, when the Captain, without resuming his seat, proposed, “Health to the bride and bridegroom! God bless them!” He then took Stanley’s hand, and having shaken it warmly, said,

“General, this may be deemed unusual; but the circumstances which have induced it are unusual too. I am inspired with the most happy feelings, and must give vent to them in some way. I am proud, General, as a father I am proud, not only of my child, but of her husband, whom I now more than ever esteem. His conduct this day has been beyond all praise. He has proved that he possesses that excellence of heart which must command universal admiration. I have the highest confidence in him—the very highest confidence; and I feel quite sure that that confidence will

never be forfeited. "Treat my child," he added, addressing Stanley, "cherish her, my boy, as a most tender plant. She has a heart which will never prove unfaithful to you, but which may be easily broken. May every earthly happiness attend you both! May Providence bless and protect you!"

The Captain was here overpowered by his feelings, and resumed his seat in tears, and shortly afterwards Stanley expressed his acknowledgments in an appropriate speech of great beauty and point, and concluded by proposing the health of the Captain. Toasts then became the order of the evening. The General proposed Mrs. Joliffe; the Captain, the widow; Albert, Miss Johnson; Stanley, the General; and the General, Albert; when they rejoined the ladies with the happiest feelings in the ascendant; and after coffee, Miss Jefferson—Amelia's governess, who had been retained as companion to Mrs. Joliffe—went to the piano, and dancing commenced, and was kept up till four, when they all retired save the Captain and the General, who in the early part of the evening decided upon having a bottle of mulled claret alone.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SONS OF GLORY.

GENERAL and Miss Johnson left Richmond the next day; but Stanley, Amelia, and the widow, remained there a week; when Mrs. Joliffe, having accepted the invitation of the widow, came up with her and Amelia, while Stanley brought Albert with him.

With this arrangement Albert was especially pleased: the prospect of passing a few days in town with Stanley met his views to a shade; for Richmond, with all its beauties, had but few charms for him. He had, moreover, at that period, a great object in view. While at Cambridge he had associated with certain Sons of Glory, whose poetic accounts of their achievements in the Metropolis had fired his soul; and as some of them happened to be then in

town, he resolved to obtain an introduction at head-quarters, in order that, if he did not immortalize himself, he might, at least, do something to astonish their nerves. He, therefore, lost no time in calling upon the chief Son of Glory—the chief, at least, among the Cambridge men,—the Hon. Harry Slasher, who was highly pleased to see him, and who appointed to meet him that evening at nine, with the view of showing him “a little real life.”

Accordingly at nine Albert went to the place appointed; and at about half-past twelve a person called upon Stanley, and requested to see him in private. The servant who took up this message delivered it with an air of deep mystery, for he did not exactly understand it.

“Oh! if you please, sir,” said he, “there’s a person below that wants to speak to you privately. He wouldn’t send up his name, because he said you wouldn’t know it.”

“What kind of person? What is he like?” inquired Stanley.

“He is a policeman,” replied the servant.

“A policeman!” echoed Stanley, and the

blood rushed to his cheeks, for he thought of the Quadrant. "A policeman! What can *he* want? However, say I'll be with him directly."

"Dear Stanley!" cried Amelia as the servant left the room: "what on earth can it be?"

"Before I can tell you, my love, I must ascertain myself," replied Stanley, who went down at once, expecting, of course, that his connection with the Quadrant affair had been traced.

"Step this way, will you," said he, addressing the policeman, as he went into the parlour, that the thing might be private. "Now, what is it?"

"I've come," said the policeman, "from Mr. John Jones, a young gentleman that's now in the station. He wants you to bail him."

"Jones!" cried Stanley, who felt much relieved. "I don't know any person of that name."

"Between you and me," said the policeman, confidentially, "it strikes me it isn't his right name, but that's the name he gives."

"What sort of fellow is he?"

“Quite a young gentleman, with light curly hair.”

“Oh!—I know him. What, is he tipsy?”

“No; he has been up to that rum dodge of wrenching off knockers. There was no less than eleven of ’em found upon his person, besides a mob of bell-pulls, and several scrapers.”

“The young dog!” exclaimed Stanley. “Have a glass of wine; I’ll go with you.”

The wine was rung for; and while the policeman was helping himself, Stanley returned to Amelia.

“It is nothing of importance,” said he, on entering the room. “I shall be back in ten minutes.”

“But tell me what it is, pray, do,” said Amelia, “and then my mind will be at ease. I shall conceive a thousand fears if you do not.”

“Well, well; Albert, it seems, has got into some scrape, and has sent for me in order to get out of it.”

“Nothing, I hope, serious?”

“Oh, no; nothing. I have but to go for

him, and there will be an end of the matter. It's a ridiculous affair altogether."

"Well, return to me as soon as possible—there's a dear!"

Stanley promised to do so, and, having sent for a cab, he and the policeman proceeded to the station.

On entering the place, the first person whom he saw was the delinquent, who had, as a special favour, been allowed to remain there until his messenger returned; and while Stanley was speaking to him on the subject privately, the policeman whom he had accompanied was transacting some cabalistic business with the inspector, which had evidently reference to the matter in hand.

"You wish to become bail for this person?" said the inspector, at length.

"I do," replied Stanley.

"Are you a housekeeper?"

"Yes; but what is the amount of bail demanded?"

"The usual business—five pounds."

"Well, then, as I am not known, it will be better, perhaps, for me to deposit that amount."

"I am satisfied; but you can do so if you please," said the inspector, and Stanley at once produced the five pounds; and when a document, which touched distinctly upon the production of John Jones's body in the morning, had been read to him with appropriate solemnity, he slipped a half sovereign into the hand of the policeman, and retired with the said John Jones on his arm.

"What could have induced you," said Stanley, on leaving the station, "to commit so monstrous an act of folly?"

"Folly!" exclaimed Albert. "It's glorious! All our fellows pride themselves upon it. All do it who have a particle of pluck!"

"I have heard of its being done, certainly, by men who have been drunk; but you are perfectly sober."

"So much the *more* glorious! That's the beauty of it! Any fellow can do it when he has been drinking; when sober, very few have the courage. It is then, and then only, that the pluck is displayed. But *did* you see them in the corner? There was half a hundred weight of them at least! If it hadn't been for

that, I should never have been taken. A fellow can't, you know, cut away so well with a weight like that at his tail."

"Well, but what was your object?—what did you mean to do with them?"

"Do with them!—send them as trophies to head-quarters, through Slasher. You have heard of Harry, of course—Lord Mountjove's son?"

"I don't remember."

"Oh, you must have heard of him. I'll introduce you. There's no mistake *about* him. I know where to find him—he expects me. Come now?"

"No; not to-night. I promised to return immediately."

"Oh, how about Amelia? She, of course, knows nothing of this?"

"She knows that you have got into some trifling scrape."

"Well, we'll soon set that square. But I wish you would come. He is waiting for me, I know."

"Then he prompted you to this expedition?"

"Of course,—in order to qualify myself.

By the by, they are going to have a glorious meeting to-morrow! You *must* be there."

"Well, we shall see."

"Oh! you must! I'll call upon Harry directly this business is settled."

"Why, it is settled already. You mustn't appear."

"Not appear!—ridiculous! Do you imagine that *I* care what the old fool of a magistrate may say? He'll fine me a couple of pounds, perhaps or something of that sort. And what if he does treat me to a lecture? It will, at all events, be known how many trophies I had."

"Nonsense! You must not appear."

"But you wouldn't have me act like a coward?"

"I would countenance no act of meanness or dishonour; but to expose yourself, under the circumstances, were absurd. Besides, although your name would not appear, the thing might reach the ears of the governor; and I presume you would not much like that?"

"Why, I can't conscientiously say that I should."

“ Well, let the affair rest as it is. You don’t appear. They have got the amount of the bail—that is forfeited of course, and the thing is settled.”

But this was a mode of settlement of which Albert did not at all approve ; for his associates at Cambridge, although he had been there so short a time, had metamorphosed him from a quiet, studious, gentlemanly fellow, into a hair-brained, devil-may-care, reckless young scamp. He did, however, eventually yield to the advice of Stanley, who, could *he* on all occasions have summoned sufficient firmness to practise the prudence he could preach, would have been far less liable to error than he was.

On reaching home, Albert was severely interrogated, of course, by Amelia ; and while he was making the thing “ all right and straight,” as he termed it, with her, Stanley was labouring to conceive what description of pleasure that of wrenching off knockers in the abstract could be. He felt that its character was peculiar : that he felt from the first ; but he could not imagine it to be great. As, however, he invariably assumed that a man must have some

specific motive to stimulate him to action, he in this particular instance arrived at the conclusion, that although there might be no delight in the achievement of itself, the most noble, the most beautiful feelings might be awakened by the applause of those who held that achievement to be glorious.

It was this consideration, and a high one it was, which induced him to consent the next day to accompany Albert in the evening. He was anxious to see what description of creatures they were by whom actions of this peculiar description were applauded ; and hence, immediately after dinner, no official declaration touching the contemptuous non-appearance of Mr. John Jones having arrived, he and Albert repaired to the place appointed.

It was dusk when they reached the rendezvous ; but few of the Sons of Glory had arrived. Slasher was there, and some others, who, like him, were great among the small ; but none of the regularly recognised great men had made their appearance. ' Of course, Stanley was immediately presented to Slasher, and Slasher was graciously pleased to declare, that

he wished he might die if he didn't rather like him ; which was highly complimentary, and very good of him, considering.

“ We shall have some crack fellows here presently, I presume ? ” observed Stanley.

“ *Out and outers !* ” replied Slasher. *Can't* be a second opinion about 'em !—down to every dodge safe as a hammer !—nothing like 'em alive ! ”

From this Stanley was of course bound to infer that they were very superior fellows indeed, and was about to give expression to his feelings upon the point, when a stunning shout was heard—a shout which made the air tremble, and threatened to shock the nerves of nature.

“ Hark ! *hark !* ” cried Slasher, with an expression of ecstasy, “ here they are ! here they are ! Something new, I'll bet a million ! The chief ! ” he added, on reaching the window. “ Let the Earl beat that when he knows how to do it ! Hurrah for ould Ireland ! hurrah ! ”

Stanley was at the window in an instant, and saw a well-dressed, powerfully-built fellow, embellished with a coalheaver's cap, and duly mounted upon a broad-backed dray-horse,

preceded by a brass band playing with unexampled fury, "See! the conquering hero comes!" and followed by a travelling carriage built in the very first style, and drawn by eight decent donkeys, mounted by eight postilions, chosen from the smallest sweeps extant. In the carriage sat six intellectual dustmen, and it was extremely interesting to mark the exalted dignity with which they sat, and the gracious condescension with which they occasionally removed the short pipes from their mouths, and spat upon the multitude by whom they were cheered.

This triumphant procession moved but slowly along; for the donkeys not having been used to the work, could not be persuaded to stick to the collar, nor would they—albeit the postilions, with consummate tact and judgment, sat as near their tails as possible—be prevailed upon to repudiate the habit they had acquired of kicking over the traces. Their inexorable adherence to this little irregularity caused considerable delay; but although the hero, scorning to go a-head without his suite, turned and waited on every occasion with the most ex-

emplary patience for the re-adjustment of things, the whole procession 'did eventually reach its destination, amidst the most deafening shouts. The hero then gracefully dismounted, by virtue of standing upon the broad flat back of his charger, calling for three times three cheers, and then leaping to the ground ; and when his friends had alighted from the carriage—the delicate rose-pink lining of which had, in consequence of the grandeur with which they had reposed, become a shade or two darker in places—he and they entered the house with due solemnity of step, and soon appeared in the room set apart for their orgies. Here Stanley was in due form presented to the hero, who presented the half dozen dustmen to him, and then summoned three waiters, and having with a carving knife slashed off the tails of the coat of the first, and given him a five-pound note to purchase a new one ; he presented the second with a kick, and sent him down stairs for ten pounds' worth of silver ; and desired the third to bring up pots of porter, two at a time, continually, till further orders.

The demand for the silver had been obviously

anticipated, for the supply was immediate ; and when the required amount, *nominally*, had been poured into a hat, the hero appeared at the window, and was again hailed with cheers.

“A scramble ! a scramble !” shouted the masses below, who seemed to know by instinct that a scramble was intended ; for they instantly squared their arms, opened their shoulders, and elbowed each other with the most perfect freedom. Some held up their hats ; but that the hero wouldn’t have. “Fair play !” he exclaimed, “and no tiles !” and no edict was ever more quickly obeyed.

The scramble then commenced, and the scene which followed was delightful to behold. Prompted by the sweetest and most beautiful feelings of which the human heart is susceptible, the masses dashed after every handful of silver with a zeal which could not in any cause have been surpassed. If we check emulation, we enervate, if indeed we do not absolutely destroy, the comprehensive mind of man ; and as in a scramble, the spirit of emulation is most powerfully developed, it legitimately follows that, for the benefit of the species,

scrambles ought to be upheld. This the hero felt strongly, and being deep in the philosophy of scrambling, he on this occasion made his knowledge tell, inasmuch as, instead of strewing his favours right and left, like a man without due discrimination, he directed his attention to one particular point ; and the moment he beheld a few happy individuals luxuriantly rolling in the mud, he pelted them with diligence, that the rest might roll over them, and thus impart general joy. This, however, is not to be accomplished by an inexperienced hand ; it requires great judgment, and a practically acquired knowledge of human nature. It is all very easy, when you have to deal with boys. You may get them down, because their minds are not matured ; but when you have to manage a mass of full-grown men and women, with all their faculties about them, and your object is to make them form a heap, so that, in order to regain their position as first-class animals in creation, they may wriggle and twist in and out like a corresponding number of live silver eels, it is absolutely essential for you to have obtained a perfectly clear insight into the workings of the human heart.

As in this particular instance the active energies of a mighty mind were devoted exclusively to the achievement of this great desideratum, the result was the most complete success; and no sooner had the laudable efforts of the hero been triumphantly crowned,—no sooner had he brought about so happy a state of things, that a mighty mass of intelligent beings lay entangled, like the *Gordia* to be found on the banks of the Thames about low-water mark in the mud,—than a heart-stirring, ear-piercing, soul-inspiring shout, announced the near approach of him who stood second in the estimation of the Sons of Glory.

As a matter of fair play, the hero instantly retired, and down came the glorious pageant of his rival. It was headed by a talented company of twelve wooden-legged fiddlers, who had been engaged expressly for this occasion, and who scraped away at the overture to “All round my hat” with surpassing precision and beauty; the presence of mind which these professional individuals displayed was remarkable; and as, by one of their articles of agreement, each was bound to wear a shirt with the right sleeve duly tucked up to the shoulder, in order

to give the wrist and elbow full play, their appearance was not only unique and picturesque, but rather solemn than not, while the expression with which each particular tone was produced was excessively delicate and true. Then followed the second Son of Glory himself, majestically seated in a peculiarly constructed triumphal car, which belonged to a hearthstone and Flanders-brick merchant, and which was drawn by six thorough-bred bull dogs, appropriately muzzled.* As he passed, he was hailed with the purest delight; and although, in point of physical strength, his rival had the advantage, the strength of his moral influence over the multitude, was equal, if not indeed, superior, to his. Of this he appeared to be perfectly conscious; and hence as he rode, strongly supported by a master-sweep at one wheel, and a member of the prize-ring, who was a highly distinguished pickpocket in his early youth, at the other, his heart throbbed

* This was, of course, antecedent to this remarkably aristocratic mode of travelling being prohibited by 2 and 3 Vic. cap. 17, sec. 56.

with the proudest feelings a mortal can know. The next point of attraction was his suite, in three mud-carts. This had an imposing effect. It consisted of bricklayers' labourers, with their insignia of office, scavengers, nightmen, costermongers, coach-cads, and sweeps ; and if laughter, unrestrained by the shackles of civilisation, be indicative of happiness, they were the most happy beings upon the face of the earth. Their joy developed itself in one continued roar. It was enchanting to hear them, and beautiful to see them with the utmost familiarity recognise their friends among the multitude. Oh ! there was no paltry pride about them ! Nor was there the least about the glorious and gallant Captain whom they immediately preceded, and who brought up a long line of open cabs, crowded with basket-women, street-sweepers, cobblers, and journey-men tailors, who form, perhaps, the most interesting class of the genus to which it is said, as a matter of courtesy, they belong. He was perfectly free from that pitiful sin, and so, indeed, were they all. They all seemed to be inspired with the spirit of independence, which

prompted them to treat the conventional forms of society with the most supreme contempt. This, of course, was refreshing. All appeared to enjoy it highly ; and so striking and so varied were the distinguishing features of this pageant, that it was on all hands acknowledged that it beat that of the hero into fits.

On arriving at head-quarters, the second Son of Glory alighted from his car, when, with the utmost condescension, he proceeded to assist his suite to alight ; and, while they who were in the first cart were giving him three enthusiastic cheers, he drew out the pin which secured the body of the cart to the shafts, and shot them out with great ability. The applause which followed this physical development of his moral influence unhappily gave the signal to the rest of the suite, who did *but* turn their eyes, and in an instant it was amazing the activity they displayed. They leaped out of the two other vehicles, some over the wheels, some over the tail-boards, and others over the shafts, with the alacrity of imps ; while the anxiety they exhibited when they saw their noble

patron approaching, clearly proved it to be a moment of deep interest to them all.

On being defeated, so far at least as the spilling of two cart-loads out of the three was concerned, the noble person philosophically took the arms of his two immediate friends, the prize-fighter and the sweep, walked with great deliberation to the bar of the tavern, and thence—having ordered all the beer his enraptured followers could drink in an hour—proceeded at once to the room of state, where he was cheered very loudly, and complimented highly on the taste, tact, and talent he had displayed.

By this time the majority of the members had arrived, and, as no other pageant was expected, the chief summoned them to the table, and ordered six dozen of champagne to begin with, and, on its being produced, gave “Success to the Sons of Glory!”

This was, of course, enthusiastically honoured; and when the applause had become in a measure subdued, one of the intellectual dustmen was called upon for a song, which he

instantly gave with great feeling and grace. His voice was a baritone strictly, but one of extraordinary compass. No tenor could beat him above, no bass could surpass him below; and as, in the course of nature, he unconsciously got into an infinite variety of keys, it might at the time have been rationally inferred that his organ was about a six and a half octave.

Immediately after this excellent song, the vice-president—the second Son of Glory—proposed the health of the chief; a proposition which was instantly hailed with delight, and, when the toast had been drunk, each member turned his glass down and broke it.

The noble chief then majestically rose and said, with all due solemnity: “I’ll tell you what it is,—you’re a set of trumps, and that’s all about it. (*Cheers.*) I know you’re all made of the right sort of stuff, and there’s no mistake about you. (*Loud cheers.*) I expect you’ll beat the world. (*Renewed cheering.*) I’m not going to give you a long speech, because I hate it; so I’ll drink all your jolly good healths in return, and may you always have power to floor the police!”

The conclusion of this display of eloquence was honoured with three distinct cheers, after which three deafening groans were given for the police, whom they naturally viewed with ineffable disgust.

As soon as this mighty demonstration of feeling had subsided, the glorious and gallant Captain, who stood third, proposed the health of the vice, of whose virtues he spoke highly; and when the glasses had been drained, turned, and broken, as before, the noble second Son of Glory rose and delivered himself as follows:—

“ My noble friend in the chair said he hated long speeches,—so do I; and that’s just why I never go down to the House. If, therefore, you expect to have a long speech from me, all I can say is, I cordially wish you may get it. (*Cheers and laughter.*) But to the point. You have drunk my health—thank you!—that’s as good as cutting away for a month. ‘Brevity,’ as somebody says,—Milton, or Moncrief, or one of those author fellows,—‘Brevity is the soul of wit.’ And it’s devilish good, too; for I like to be brief, and so that’s all about it. (*Tremendous applause.*) But I say!—perhaps we are not getting on!—here are forty of us!

It strikes me that we shall soon be enabled to boast the possession of forty tons of knockers in a spacious saloon, with the sides completely covered with door-plates, and festooned all round with double rows of hats captured from the great unboiled. (*Immense cheering.*) What can't we do? Here's my friend, the clergyman," alluding to his right-hand supporter, the sweep, "has undertaken to stop up in one night the whole of the chimneys in Grosvenor Square—"

"*And* no mistake!" exclaimed the distinguished individual in question. There's a mob of pots, *no* doubt, in that 'ere skweyer; but that's a no odds—they shall all be bunged up, and then *p'raps* there won't be a *leetle* smoke in the neighbourwood! *Oh!* no! It somehow or another *strikes* me, there'll be about enough to make bacon of the whole bilin'!"

Here the "clergyman" gave an interesting wink, and having mixed half a bottle of champagne with a pint of beer, prepared to take a mighty draught as his noble friend resumed.

"Well, I don't know that I've any thing else to say. Chummy's broken the thread. But, however, I'll give you—success to our order,

and down with the police, and a bad night's rest to Bobby Peel."

This patriotic sentiment was loudly applauded, and various others followed in rapid succession; but at length Slasher rose, and having introduced Stanley, who was sitting on his right, proposed his health, on the ground that, as their object was to make themselves as powerful as possible, they ought to hail with pleasure the accession of one whose look was sufficient to prove him to be nothing but an out and outer.

Stanley's health was accordingly drunk, and he felt, of course, flattered; but he was not *exactly* the "out and outer" they imagined. He had, however, no desire to undeceive them, and therefore rose, less with the view of acknowledging the toast than of indulging his taste for that refined subtle irony, in which he began to excel.

"You will believe," said he, "of course, that I feel highly honoured, not only by this introduction to the true Sons of Glory, but by the warm, nay I may say the enthusiastic, manner in which my name has been received. The

pleasure I have experienced in the society of those brilliant persons whom I still see around me, has been great ; but I candidly confess to you that it would have been greater, and far more pure, had their legitimate sphere of action been more comprehensive. I presume that this glorious institution is yet but in its infancy. I am prepared to make every allowance for that ; still I must say, that its members do not at present appear to be anything like the trumps I expected to find them."

"What do you mean? What do you mean?" exclaimed the younger Sons of Glory, who panted for the pleasure of calling him out.

"I mean," replied Stanley, "that you have done really nothing to immortalise yourselves. Immortality can never be secured by confining your operations to knockers and bells!"

"They have not been thus confined."

"I admit they have not strictly. You have an elegant variety of door-plates; but where are all the parochial weather-cocks? Policemen's hats and truncheons you have in abundance; but *have* you ever captured an entire

suit of clothes? You have stopped up chimneys, extinguished the gas, practised beautifully with the air-gun, and wrenched off an orb; but where is the ladle of Aldgate pump? —where is the shield of Achilles? The royal pigtail still hangs down the back of the Third George; that sublime work of art, the striking statue of the Fourth, stands at King's Cross still; the sceptre of Elizabeth is still in her hand; the bust of her favourite Shakspeare is still in Wych Street; the pepper-box still adorns the Royal Academy; the Mercury of the Morning Post still stands upon the parapet; while the ball and cross are still upon the top of St. Paul's! It is to these things, and all such as these, that I am anxious to direct your attention. Let *them* be captured, and then we may establish a museum for the private exhibition of our trophies, with the names of the captors emblazoned thereon, that our children and our children's children, nay, even the remotest posterity, may know that we were Sons of Glory indeed."

Before the conclusion of this speech, the fiery malcontents were calmed: but when

Stanley resumed his seat the applause was deafening. He had won all their hearts ; he was, in their view, a trump of the first water ; he had opened to them a new field of glory, and had thereby created so powerful a sensation, that they immediately formed themselves into committees, with the view of discussing the practicability of the feats he had suggested.

This Stanley no sooner perceived than—it being rather late—he and Albert, without ceremony departed, and, on leaving the house, entered at large into that broad and strongly-marked distinction which is drawn—not by the law, but by those to whom its administration is intrusted—between professional and amateur felons. Albert, of course, would not hear of the “felonious intent;” he repudiated the notion with scorn ; but Stanley stuck to it with firmness, albeit he admitted that these amateur felons were men whose gentlemanly feelings and refined sensibilities were so acute, that either of them would, without the slightest remorse, shoot the dearest friend he had through the heart if in an unguarded moment he dared to impugn his honour.

CHAPTER VIII.

IN WHICH SIR WILLIAM'S DESIGNS ARE MORE
CLEARLY DEVELOPED.

WHEN Sir William originally felt that he might compass the fall of Stanley—when he conceived the design of enriching himself by virtue of reducing him, by “honourable” means, to a state of comparative destitution, he was actuated solely by the vile passion of avarice; but after having seen and conversed with Amelia,—after having been received as a friend, and allowed the privileges of a friend—he was inspired with a stronger passion even than that.

He had proved that Stanley really loved Amelia, and that Amelia most fondly loved him; but he did not despair of being able, eventually, to bring about a mutual revulsion

of feeling, by inducing and cherishing inconstancy on the one hand, and a conviction of wrong on the other.

He possessed much subtlety; he had seen much of the world; he had no inconsiderable knowledge of the workings of the human heart, and more especially conversant was he with the evil passions of which it is susceptible. He knew how powerful an instrument the sense of deep injury was in effecting the destruction of virtue by promoting that terrible feeling of revenge, of which the gratification teems with frightful misery: and this instrument he resolved to make available, and to use.

While studying the character of Amelia, while gazing upon her beauty; that beauty which intellect and purity of soul when conjoined never fail to impart—with an eye whose expression, to one less pure than she, would have plainly portrayed the guilty mind, he felt—he could not but feel that the attainment of the base object he had proposed would require all the villainous ingenuity at his command; but this feeling only tended to urge him on the more; as, in the view of the world, gold is more valuable than other metals, only

because it can be with less facility procured, so in his estimation was Amelia to him.

The passion by which he was prompted could not be called love. Love is not an essentially selfish passion. It embraces the peace of the object beloved. Who that loves seeks to compass the ruin of that object? Will he, with a view to the gratification of any feeling of self, involve her in moral destruction? No : he will guard her, he will cherish her—her virtue is his pride ; the promotion of her happiness forms the strongest, the dearest wish of his heart ; her honour is as dear to him as his own ; he will lay down his life to preserve it. It was not love. It was nothing like love. It was a grovelling, morbid, sensual passion, springing from baseness, to which love never can be allied. What cared he for the feelings of Amelia ? The eternal destruction of her happiness was his aim ; he sought to wean her affections from Stanley, and Stanley's affections from her, by inducing him to form such connexions as those which undermine domestic peace, and thereby causing her to feel that she was indeed neglected.

His immediate object, therefore, was not

alone to enrich himself by impoverishing Stanley, but to draw him into the vortex of vice; and, in pursuance of this object, he determined on losing no time.

“I think I shall cut you,” said he, soon after Albert’s departure for Cambridge. “It strikes me that you and I must cease to associate; for upon my honour you are making me as bad as yourself.”

“What’s the matter?” inquired Stanley. “Anything wrong?”

“Wrong!—why, *you* may not deem it essentially wrong to drag a strictly virtuous man into scenes of dissipation; but it is, notwithstanding, wrong in the abstract. I admit that my natural disposition is not that of a recluse; but I used to have a little discretion.”

“And do you ascribe the loss of it to me?”

“To whom else can I ascribe it? ‘Evil communications corrupt good manners.’ I am not like the same man.”

“I feel flattered, of course,” said Stanley. “I scarcely could have supposed that I possessed so much influence.”

“It is a disease,” rejoined Sir William, “and

that disease is contagious. It creeps and grows upon a virtuous man almost imperceptibly ; it prostrates his energies for business ; it renders study a bore. It may be, and is, doubtless, all very well for you, who have no pursuit, save that of pleasure ; but for a man like me, having the interests of the nation in general, and those of his constituents in particular to promote, it becomes a very serious affair."

" So it does," said Stanley, smiling, " and more especially serious to a man who has those interests so deeply at heart as you have. But how have I effected this change ? What scenes have I ever drawn you into ?"

" I scarcely can tell how the change has been effected, nor need I enumerate the scenes into which I have been drawn. It is sufficient for me to know that I never go into any one of them without you, and that were it not for you, I should never go at all. Now, there's a masquerade, or a fancy ball, or something of that sort, to-night ; I suppose you have made up your mind to go to that ?"

" I have not even given it a thought."

“Nor should I, had it not been for you. But, of course, you will be there?”

“I have no objection to go.”

“I knew that. And you would drag me with you?”

“Why, as I should not think of going alone, and as your society is at all times so very agreeable——”

“Exactly. You need say no more. But if I go—however dazzling may be the scene—and I expect that it will be rather brilliant—I leave precisely at one ; remember that.”

“With all my heart. I have no desire to stop late.”

“Of course you have not. You never have. But let us make up our minds to leave at one, or half-past at the very latest.”

“Whenever you are ready I’ll be ready too. But, are we to dress?”

“Why it is more of a fancy ball, I believe, than anything else. But we can soon get dresses. Will you call for me at ten?”

“I will ; but recollect we leave at one.”

Sir William smiled, and having observed it was really too bad to draw him into such

scenes, took his leave, with the understanding that they were to start from the Albany at ten.

He had proved that this ironical style was that which told best with Stanley: he had proved that the highest point of his ambition was to be regarded as a fellow of infinite spirit; and that, although he seemed to view the idea of his leading as an excellent jest, he in reality felt flattered. He therefore resolved to adhere to this style: his first object being to induce the belief that he was fascinated by Stanley, and that he and not Stanley was the victim.

And nothing in his judgment could be more easily created than such a belief. He argued thus: every man has vanity; every man is vain of the real or fancied possession of some particular quality, and his vanity forms his weak point: assail that point by feeding his vanity, and the man is all your own. He had discovered the weak point of Stanley. He well knew the particular quality of which he was vain, and hence felt quite sure of effecting his ruin, which he held to be essential to the

achievement of the grand object he had in view.

Having passed the day with Amelia—who now felt inspired with gaiety and joy, for the reconciliation seemed to have perfected her happiness—Stanley at the appointed hour called upon Sir William, and they soon after started, first to procure their fancy-dresses, and then for the gay and dazzling scene.

On entering the spacious and brilliant saloon, which was crowded with persons who appeared to have been attracted from every civilized part of the globe, Sir William, in the costume of a red-cross knight, was recognised by several “foreigners of distinction,” whom he greeted, and in due form presented to Stanley.

There was not, however, nearly so much spirit displayed as Stanley expected to witness. The scene was certainly splendid and imposing; but the characters seemed to have assembled not so much for any present enjoyment as with a view to some prospective advantage. They all appeared to have an ulterior object: the expression of every countenance was indicative of design, which Stanley at first thought

strange, but attributing this comparative dullness to the fact of its being yet early, he entered into the business of the scene, and joined the dance with as much gaiety as if the task of reanimating the spirits of the whole assembly had devolved upon him alone.

While he was thus zealously engaged, Sir William was not inactive: he was looking for one who he fancied would be a far more suitable partner for his friend than the lady with whom he was dancing, and having found her, and conversed with her privately for a time, he introduced her in the most friendly manner to Stanley, of whom she at once became desperately enamoured. Her first object was to fix him as a partner; and in this she succeeded, when, as Stanley felt flattered by the preference she displayed, and as, by virtue of having a constant flow of spirits she made herself extremely agreeable, he had no wish to change, and they continued to be partners during the whole of the evening.

Sir William perceived this with pleasure. It gave him immense satisfaction to see Stanley thus playing his game. He knew that he had



A. Fromquille

Portrait of Louis XIV. by Philippe de Champaigne

placed him in accomplished hands, and felt sure that his seduction from the path of honour had been thereby secured.

“ Now,” said he, as Stanley and his partner were chatting gaily in the promenade, “ you remember : one o’clock.”

“ I am ready,” replied Stanley, “ when you are.”

“ Why—why !” exclaimed his partner, in amazement, “ you do not intend to leave yet ! You must not dream of such a thing. I could not possibly part with you. Besides it would be cruel. If you leave, I am resolved to leave with you. But come, pray take me in to supper ? You *will* let me sup with you ? Will you not ? Come ! It is a pleasure I have been anticipating the whole of the evening : you will not deprive me of that.”

“ There is my guide and governor,” said Stanley. “ I shall be happy to do so if he will grant permission.”

“ I knew precisely how it would be,” observed Sir William. “ I knew that *we* should never get away at one o’clock. However, if we are to have supper, we had better have it

now. My partner and I will follow ; but recollect, immediately after we leave."

They accordingly repaired to the supper-room at once, and the champagne passed round with great rapidity. The ladies drank with characteristic freedom, and Sir William was constantly filling his glass ; but Stanley, notwithstanding the repeated challenges he received, was unusually cautious.

Of course, after supper the ladies insisted upon having another dance : one more—only one ; they really could not think of leaving without : it was actually indispensable, and as such was assumed to be the case, the consent of their partners was obtained, and they returned to the ball-room, and danced the next set, and the next : in short, they continued to dance until half-past four, when Stanley resolved to quit the scene,—a resolution which could not be shaken.

It was then that Sir William discovered that the project of the evening had failed, for it was then that he ascertained that the partner whom he had selected for Stanley had been unable to prevail upon him to make an appointment, or

even to promise that he would see her again. He was, notwithstanding, pleased that he had taken him there : indeed, having on the instant conceived the design of causing a tale to reach the ears of Amelia based upon the fact of his having been present, he fancied that his purpose might be answered as well, although he would most decidedly have preferred Stanley's absolute fall.

CHAPTER IX.

VENERABLE JOE PROMULGATES HIS MATRIMONIAL
VIEWS.

As Bob very early in the evening on which Sir William designed to lay the foundation of Stanley's ruin, ascertained that he should not be again wanted, he put up his horses, made himself truly tidy, and then went to have a few hours' confidential conversation with Venerable Joe, whom he held in high esteem.

Bob scarcely could tell how it was that he respected that venerable gentleman so highly, although it may with perfect safety be attributed to the fact of his morality being strictly correct, while his deportment was perfectly gentleman-like and free ; but he certainly did regard him as a very superior sort of an individual, one from whom much valuable knowledge might be gleaned, and with whom a man of

honour might associate without having his reputation either tarnished or impugned.

On the other hand, Venerable Joe had inspired an exalted appreciation of Bob's integrity. He *knew* that his moral principles were sound, inasmuch as he had paid like a peer of the realm for the brandy-and-water he lost on the Derby. But, independently of this—although this was the cement, for if Bob could not have paid for that brandy-and-water, their friendship, of course, must have been at an end,—he admired his intellectual acquirements as he had witnessed their development in the tap, where Bob once actually put a man down who was canvassing the conduct of Alexander the Great; and therefore, whenever they met, they met as friends—bosom friends—friends bound to each other for life.

On this occasion, to show the strength and virgin purity of the friendship which had sprung up between them, Bob no sooner beheld Venerable Joe than he struck a very highly-approved pugilistic attitude, and the venerable gentleman struck another, and they sparred with great science for more than ten

minutes in really the most affectionate manner possible.

“ Vell, my leetle lily !” exclaimed the venerable gentleman, who was the first to drop his arms, “ *and* wot is the werdict ? Hay ! ’ow do you bring it in now ?”

“ Never better,” replied Bob. “ How ’s yourself ?”

“ *Hif* it warn’t for them roomatiz ! Them ’s the on’y things as wexes my sentiments. But ve’re all on us safe to ’ave somethink ! The best vay ’s to look at things fillysophocle, and then they don’t seem nothink like wot they are.”

“ That ’s somewhere about the average, I believe,” observed Bob. “ But, how long will it be afore you ’re done ?”

“ Not the space of a instant. Go over to the tap, and I ’ll be with you in a leetle less than no time.”

Bob did so, and was soon after joined by his venerable friend, when they entered deeply into the discussion of various subjects, and eventually touched upon that of matrimony as it stands.

“Are you a Benediction?” inquired Bob.

The venerable gentleman scratched his head, and looked precisely as if a slight explanation would be pleasant.

“A Benediction! You know what I mean, you know. Was you ever married?”

“Not if I know it,” said Venerable Joe,—
“not a ha’porth of it! No, no; I never vos guilty of that. But why didn’t you put it in the right p’int of wiew? Why didn’t you arst if I ever vos mad? I shood then a hunderstood it; ’cos to be married is to be mad!”

“Under all circumstantials?” inquired Bob.

“Why, hif you ’ve enough, you know, for to keep a missis, and to bring up a whole mob of leetle indiiduals respectable, it mayn’t be so bad; but, onless a man is gifted with a hindependent business he don’t ought to do it. He ’d better p’ison hissself out-and-out. But *you* never dream of marrying?”

“Why, I don’t know; I do sometimes think it would be pleasant.”

“Pleasant!” cried the venerable gentleman.
“But, in course, you ’re on’y joking?”

“No; as true as I ’m alive I ’m quite serious.”

“You are? Then jist let me give you a leetle advice. Turn the hidear clean out of your ’ed. Don’t have it! Marriage is a swindle: it ’s a reg’lar himposition. It ’s all wery well, p’raps, for genelman to marry, ’cos, in course, they can wery well stand the hexpence, and it makes good for servants; but for us to think of doing sich a thing! it ’s no go:—mark my words, it ’s no go. The gals, in course, have a nat’ral right to ketch us, if they can; but we don’t ought to be cotched. It ’s a dead take in! Besides, marriage spiles the *gals*. Vile you ’re a-courtin’ on ’em, butter von’t melt in their mouths: they dress nice, and speak nice, and know how to behave: but, directly you get ’em home they let you know vot ’s o’clock. That ’s the p’int. Then, instead of sweet vords, smiles, and sutterer, you ’ve nothink but blowin’s up, black looks, and bounce. Then ’s ven they lets their tongues loose. It ’s then ven they show off, and let ’s you see the difference. They know they ’re

all right. You can't help yourself then. They sets you at defiance. You may take your change out of it, and go and do your best and your vust: try *all* you know, there 's no gettin' rid on 'em. Vot is it, then, but a dead take in? Vot is it but a reg'lar out-and-out himposition? If I buy an 'oss to go quiet in 'arness, and ven I gets him home I finds the warmant full of wice, is it anythink but a swindle? And, vot is it but a swindle ven I marries a gal vich varrants herself to be a good un, and turns out a bad un?"

"But they are not all alike?" suggested Bob.

"I don't know. They're pooty much of a muchness, take 'em out of the kitchen. If you're always flush o' money, you may manage to get along with a few on' em, *praps*; but the moment you happen to be short, they begin to let out. Cooks, however, them's the warmant! I'll back 'em to beat the world. There! if I had my time to come over agin, and a cook and a bottle of pison vos putt afore me, if I vos obligated for to take aither the one or the tother, I'd svalle the p'ison with joy."

"But there's some cooks a decentish sort," urged Bob.

“ Not a single indiividual one among ’em. They ’re a werry queer lot, and has a lot they do make the most warmentist of vives upon the face of the earth. But s’pose a man does get a decentish one—not a cook, for that’s clean out of natur’—but s’pose he *happens* to get hold of a fairish piece o’ goods, vot’s his ’appiness? Hindependence—the joy of his life’s gone. He can’t go out arout ketchin’ it ven he gets back. If he meets with a friend, he mustn’t stop with that friend ; nayther must he bring him home, onless he vonts for to have him hinsulted. He may call hissself master of his own crib if he likes ; but vot a man calls hissself under them there circumstantial is a werry different thing from vot he is. It’s the cruellest specie of slavery in natur.’ Tork o’ the black Africans ! —And then the expense : that’s another himposition. They tell yer, in course, vere one can live a couple can live ! It’s a reg’lar do—a cruel do ! The expenses is safe to increase. You can’t go out arout adoublin’ on ’em, no how. On’y try Gravesend jist for instance. Hindependent of the expense of riggin’ out—and there’s safe to be somethink or ’nother vonted—there’s a couple o’ shillin’s there ; that’s got to

be doubled ; a couple o' shillin's back ; that's got to be doubled ; a couple o' dinners, a couple o' teas—in short, a couple of every hindividual thing. Call for a glass of gin-and-water : why it's gone afore you know vere you are ! They can't drink afore marriage. Oh, no ! they can on'y jist breathe upon the hedge o' the glass ; but *von't* they dip into it after ! And then it's ' Lor ! how oncommon fast you do drink ! I ain't scarce putt my lips to it, rayley ! ' Vot are you to do ? You can't help yourself ! You call for another, vich goes the same road ! "

" Is that a fact ? " inquired Bob, who was very incredulous.

" The fact, and nothink but, " replied the venerable gentleman. " And then comes the kids. P'raps they don't cost nothink ! Why, the layin's in alone'll eat you up. And it's hodd's that they turn out young warmant after all. And if yer don't have none on 'em, then yer not 'appy : yer allus a-vishin' for 'em, allus yarnin' after 'em. And then, "—he continued, with a most mysterious aspect—" then comes the grand p'int ! Yer not sure—yer can't be sure—there's nothink to make yer sure ! That's

vere you feels it. But even if you feels sure, vich is the same thing in the long run, there yer live together, piggin' all yer life up in an a loft ! And hif you should chance to be throwed out o' place, vot a pooty perdicament yer in ! And a married servant's allus treated vuss, coss he's tied. He's safe to be imposed upon, cos he can' help hissself. They know they've got him under their thumb. But ven a man's *single*, vot a different man he is ! Then's the time he feels hissself independent. He can get a place any vere ; and if he's even hout for a time, why, he's only got his own self to look to. Besides, look at the pleasures of a single indiividual ! He gits invited out. Married men never gits invited out. And why ? Why, in course, cos they're married. It ain't o' no sort o' use to inwite them. They're not to be taken in, cos they have been taken in ; and ven they vos, there vos a end of their value. In my time, I've heered many a married man say, 'So and so's been invited to sich and sich a party ; they might have arst me.' They haven't recollected, at the time, that they vos married, and that that vos the cause. No : they've

thought themselves as heligible as they vos afore; but they werry soon find their mistake. Verehas a single man's allus out; he's allus inwited; they can't get on aroud him!—ontil he gets married, ven they find that they can get on aroud him werry well. And this ain't confined on'y to servants, although they're the rust; ve see it hevery day, and in hevery class; from the highest spere of society down to the werry lowest, it's jist hall the same; they inwite men ontil they have passed that p'int, and then they inwite 'em no more. It vexes me ven I see single men suppose that they're inwited cos they're decentish lookin', or cos they're good company. Nothink of the sort! Let 'em marry, and they'll soon find that that vosn't it."

"Still," said Bob, "there must be something in this marriage, after all. There must be something in it more than we know on."

"The married life's loaded with cusses," rejoined his venerable friend.

"But arst them that are married. What do they say about it?"

"Say! They ought to be ashamed of them-

selves to go for to try to swindle people into the belief that they are 'appy. They ought to know better. That's another himposition. They none on 'em speak the real sentiments of their minds. They on'y do it out of a specie of re-wenge. It's on'y cos they're in the mud themselves, and vant heverybody else to tumble in over head an' ears arter them—that's all."

"But you don't mean to say that there's none on 'em happy? Look at my master and missis, for instance!"

"Vell, look at your master—we'll leave out the missis, cos marriage vas 'er game, and she vun it—but look at your master—its different with genelmen, as I said afore—but look at 'im! Ain't he a hobject of suspicion!—ain't the old General been set on to keep a eye upon 'im?—ain't hevery move on 'im watched?"

"Is it though, really?" inquired Bob.

"I know it!—I know it from our butler, vich is a good feller, and never keeps anythink from us. The werry last time the Captain dined there, they vos torkin' about 'im; but they allus are torkin' about 'im; they're allus a-sayin' vot a rackety buffer he'll be, if he ain't

looked werry sharp arter. So vot's become of *his* hindependence, vith a spy upon all 'is hactions?"

"I don't at all like that," said Bob; "in my mind it ain't the ticket; and I'll just put him up to it. It's a delicate p'int; but I'll do it."

"He ought to be put up to it. It ain't by no manner o' means the thing. But don't you think he'd better a been as he vos?"

"Why, you see, there's a p'int," replied Bob. "You see master love missis, which makes all the odds."

"Love!" rejoined Venerable Joe, sarcastically. "Love's a himposition. There's been more people imposed upon by that air vord than by all the perfessional swindlers in natur'. It's a gross, a uniwersal himposition; and it's on'y werry wonderful to me that it ain't long ago been hexpunged. A gall says she loves yer. Werry well; but are you consequentially obligated for to make a fool o' yerself? No: you've only got her hipsy-dixy, and vot's the good o' that? Marry her; and you'll werry soon see 'ow sweet's the love as meets return.' But arout that, look 'ear on'y jist for hin-

stance : a gal loves a soger—vich they all do ; it's reg'lar : he's a private ; still she loves 'im—oh ! hout an' hout ! Werry well ; don't yer think she'd give 'im up for a hofficer ? In course she vood ! And why ? Why, cos it 'ud be a better chance. Has for love, it's the vickedest, the swindlinest himposition as is. The chances is vot gals looks out for. The on'y qvestion with them is, 'Is it a good chance ?' If it is, they'll have it ; if it ain't they von't—onless they can't get nothink better. It's the deadeest take in, is that love, ever heered on : a deader do never vos hin-wented. You take my advice, and don't be foozled. Venever you 'ear the vord love, always view it as a gross himposition. Hif yer don't you'll be done, and on'y find out the difference ven it's too late. Look at me, jist for hinstance. I was sixty-two in Jannerwerry last : look at that ! Sixty-two, and I ain't done yet. I'm invited to all the parties. I'm never forgot. There's the old uns, as is single, a-hoglin' on me reg'lar ; and the old uns, as is married, a-settin' their darters upon me ; it 'ud be sich a chance ! and all, in course, cos I'm single.

Why, d'yer think they'd care about my company perwided I vos married? Does it stand at all to reason they'd inwite me as they do, hif they did'nt believe I vos yet to be done? Not a bit of it! not if I vos vorth a matter o' fifty times as much as I ham. But, as it is— as I've allus escaped the himposition—there am I, never missed, allus thought on, looked up to, and respected; vlich, let me tell you, is a werry great adwantage. By the bye, I'll introduce you; you must go to one of our conversayshoneys."

"What's that?" inquired Bob.

"Vot? a conversayshoney? A slap sort of supper, in course. They're a-going to have another at Sir Hamilton Hideaways, vich is gone abroad ontill things comes a leetle bit round. He's a mean un hisself, but his servants is trumps. None but single men's admitted. Vill you go?"

Bob promised that he would; and at the same time announced that nothing could give him greater pleasure; but the arguments of the venerable gentleman—powerful and pointed though they were—failed to convince him that

marriage was a thing to be despised. But that which made a far deeper impression upon his mind, than anything else which had transpired during the discussion of this generally interesting subject, was the fact of his having been informed that his master was subjected to a system of espionage, which was, in his private judgment, excessively wrong, and therefore he held it to be incumbent upon him, as a true and faithful servant, to acquaint his master with it the very first opportunity, in order that he might thenceforward be upon his guard. He felt it, of course, to be rather a nice point for him to mention ; but conceiving it to be strictly a thing which ought to be known, he firmly made up his mind to impart that knowledge ; and, with many expressions of high consideration, took leave of his venerable friend for the night.

CHAPTER X.

STANLEY'S ELEVATION IN THE SOCIAL SCALE
PROPOSED.

As Sir William's game was to have recourse to everything tending to promote Stanley's absence from Amelia, he now flew to billiards, at which he had been an adept for years, and by which he knew that Stanley could not fail to be attracted. Stanley knew nothing of the game ; but Sir William, in the most friendly manner, of course, undertook to teach him ; and the immediate result of that teaching was, that the pupil became fascinated. Night after night, he was at it till daybreak. He thought of nothing, dreamt of nothing but laying out, cannoneing, and pocketing the red ; he was never, indeed, happy without a queue in his hand. Whether Sir William were with him or not,—and he frequently was not ; for, embracing the

opportunity which his absence afforded, he would call for him at home, with the view of conversing with Amelia—he was every evening to be found at the table. He had continually some match on hand, with the specious and highly accomplished persons whom he met—and few scoundrels are more accomplished than the higher order of billiard sharps—and who, by virtue of flattery and “tender” treatment, fleeced him of large sums of money. Still he would play. The more he lost, the more capable he felt himself of winning; and with so much ingenuity and judgment was it managed, that he not only never entertained a moment’s thought of being victimised, but proposed increased stakes every game, to which they invariably, but of course with great reluctance, consented.

When this had gone on for some time, Amelia felt very unhappy, and more especially, in consequence of having received an anonymous letter, which contained intimations prejudicial to Stanley’s reputation as a fond and faithful husband, and of which she could not help thinking, although at the time, she destroyed it

with contempt. Still she never reproached. Evening after evening was he absent, while she, in tears, was tortured by the thousand apprehensions with which, under the circumstances, solitude teems ; but on his return, she invariably flew to him and blessed him, and welcomed him home with a smile of joy. No tear was ever visible then ; no word which could indicate doubt, was ever breathed. If he offered to apologise, she would stop him with a kiss, while her eyes beamed with confidence and love.

Weeks passed, and Bob had not had what *he* deemed a fair opportunity of imparting to Stanley the information he had obtained, touching the watch that had been set upon his actions. At length, however, an excellent one offered, and he embraced it. They were returning from a shooting-match at the time, and he certainly did think, as he sat in the cab, that his master, who had spoken to him familiarly several times on the road, was in the true state of mind to entertain a grateful sense of his kindness.

“ I beg pardon, sir,” said he, after calling up

all the moral courage he had in him. "I beg pardon—I hope you won't think it a liberty; but I've got something, sir, on my sentiments, which I think it my duty to let you know on."

"Well Bob," said Stanley, "what is it?"

"Why, sir, it's—I know it's a delicate p'int, and one which, possible, I don't ought to name; but I think it a duty as I owe—"

"Out with it!" cried Stanley. "Let's have it at once."

"Well, sir; you see General Johnson—which is a genelman;—but I hope you won't name it again, 'cause I'm bound as a matter of honour."

"Well! and what of General Johnson?"

"Why, sir—it's only that you may be awares; I only do it to put you on your guard."

"Put me on my guard! What do you mean?"

"Why, sir, as I hear from the servants which told me, that General Johnson and the Captain, is spies upon all you do."

Stanley looked at him fiercely, and in an

instant, Bob saw that he had made a mistake.

“How dare you,” cried Stanley, “name a subject of this kind to me?”

“I beg pardon, sir, I hope you won’t——”

“Silence, sir! Never let me hear another syllable upon this or any other subject, in which you are not concerned, pass your lips.”

Bob shrank instinctively into the most remote corner of the cab, and scarcely breathed; but of all the base and glaring acts of ingratitude he had ever heard, or read of in history, either ancient or modern, he held this to be, beyond all dispute, the most glaring, and the most base.

“What!” thought he, privately, and in the strictest possible confidence—for he felt that any public expression of his sentiments would be, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, inexpedient—“What! Is it a dream, or is it a boney-fide wide-awake fact that a master can be found on the face of the blessed earth to behave so reg’lar ongrateful? Warn’t it all for his own good? Was it anything to me? Didn’t I name it for his own blessed self?”

And does he think, does he hope, does he expect that I'll ever, while I've breath in my body, tell him anything again? Not if I know it; *not* if I was to live on and on in his service until I was as old as Jerusalem!"

He was amazed! It was so monstrous! Nothing in the similitude of indignation could exceed his in strength; but he kept it down tightly. He scorned to give it vent; for, whenever he looked at the monster of ingratitude out of the off corner of his eye, he perceived that his aspect was strikingly ferocious.

On reaching home, Stanley,—whom Bob's information, for more than one reason, had angered,—was met by Amelia, who with dancing eyes, joyfully explained to him, that during his absence, the Captain had sent him as a present, the most elegant billiard-table she had ever beheld.

"A billiard-table!" cried Stanley, with a scowl. "How did *he* know that I ever play at billiards?"

"My dearest love!" said Amelia, "I really do not know; but I suppose papa fancied you were fond of the game, as many gentlemen are!"

“ He *knew* that I was fond of the game,” cried Stanley.

“ Then was it not, my love, the more kind of him to send it?”

“ Amelia, I have no wish to quarrel with your father; but I would have both him and the General understand, that I hold in abhorrence the character of a spy!”

“ My Stanley!” cried Amelia, who violently trembled. “What is it you mean?”

“ That table shall go back! I’ll not have it.”

“ Oh! do not return it! pray—pray do not return it! You will not? My dearest!—my Stanley! You will let me have *some* influence over you? I know you will. Consider how terrible it will be if this present be not accepted. Consider it was an act of pure kindness, and ought not to be spurned. Come, you will not—for my sake you will not return it?”

“ I will not submit to be treated like a child. I will not in silence be subjected to the pitiful system of which your father and his friend seem to be so much enamoured.”

“ My love, you have been misinformed on

some point, I am sure of it! I know my dear father to be incapable—ay, my Stanley!—incapable of any act of meanness or dishonour. But come, my love, be calm. Be sure that you have been misinformed. Be sure of it, my Stanley. I am as conscious of his integrity as I am, my dear, of yours; and I feel that I could answer for either with my life. But you will not, you will not even think of returning the table?”

Stanley was silent. He suffered himself to be caressed and reasoned with calmly, and the result was, that the table remained; but he was still highly indignant with the Captain, and could scarcely be prevailed upon to refrain from sending him what *he* deemed a proper, but which would have been in reality a most insulting letter.

Sir William watched the progress of these events—the whole of which became known to him as they occurred—with delight; but the nearer his infamous design upon the honour of Amelia approached, in his view, perfection, the more strongly did he feel that his advances must be not only gradual, but imperceptible, to

succeed. He still had frequent opportunities of conversing with her alone—for Stanley's matches with the sharps still went on, and he was constantly absent; but his studied distance increased with each visit, his respect for her apparently became more and more profound.

At length he decided upon taking another specious step, which, while it directly tended to ensure Amelia's applause, would have the effect, in a pecuniary sense, of materially accelerating Stanley's ruin.

He, of course, knew the character of Stanley well; for the promotion of his own purposes he had studied it deeply. He, therefore, knew that any proposition calculated to enable him to gain caste in society, would be seized with avidity, and carried out, as far as it could be carried out by him, with gladness. His plans were accordingly laid; and when perfected, he opened his views to Amelia, as far, at least, as he desired them to appear.

"I wish," said he, "that Stanley," of whose absence from home they had been speaking, "had something more to occupy his mind;

some study, some honourable pursuit. I am sure that he would feel much more settled than he does. Do you not think that if he had some object in view besides the mere pleasure of the day, it would be better? For instance, suppose he were in Parliament? For my own part, I should like much to see him in the House."

"Is that practicable?" inquired Amelia.

"Most certainly; and not only practicable, but easily to be accomplished."

"Dear me, I should like it above all things. Have you ever named the subject to him?"

"Never. I scarcely knew whether it would be agreeable to you."

"Oh! I should be delighted!"

"Then, of course, I will name it."

"Pray do, and urge it strongly; but I am sure that he will be overjoyed! I feel convinced that the idea is one which he never entertained."

"Well then, let me see, to-morrow."

"Oh, to-morrow you will dine with us at his mamma's."

"Of course. I'll bring the subject forward

then. It will be an excellent opportunity. His mother, I should say, will have but little objection?"

"Oh! she will be in raptures! I am sure of it. Pray do not forget it."

"I will not. Nor will I forget to ascertain in the mean time what places are likely to be open. There are two new writs about to be moved for, I know; but I'll inquire farther into the matter, and come to-morrow, prepared with every necessary information."

Amelia thanked him again and again. She indeed felt grateful to him for the interest which he apparently took in Stanley's welfare, and not only during the day, but throughout the night, dwelt with ecstasy upon the prospect which opened to her view. She was sure that her Stanley would distinguish himself in Parliament; she was certain that his speeches would be brilliant in the extreme! And then the delight she should experience in reading those speeches, interspersed with "cheers," "loud cheers," "enthusiastic cheering!"—and then, "the honourable member resumed his seat amidst thunders of applause!" Oh! it

would be so delightful! She shed tears of rapture. Her woman's heart swelled with joy and pride. And then, after a time, he would be in the Cabinet—a Right Honourable!—the Right Honourable Gentleman—the Right Honourable Member—the Right Honourable Stanley Thorn! And then the Prime Minister!—the Premier of England!—the right hand of Royalty!—loaded with honours, dining daily at the palace! Could anything surpass it? And if talent could win them, these honours would be won; for who possessed the talent of her Stanley? It was a noble prospect!—a glorious prospect!—a prospect on which she delighted to dwell. But on the following day, when the subject was renewed, her views were altogether eclipsed by the widow, who saw with unparalleled distinctness, that Stanley would, in less than six months, be created a Peer.

“And what,” inquired Stanley, when the subject had been explained, “do you suppose would be about the expense of my election?”

“The expenses,” replied Sir William, “are

in all cases governed in the first place by the nature of the opposition, and in the next by the character of the electors. Some constituencies are comparatively pure, while others are grossly corrupt, and require an immense deal of management, treating, and so on."

" Oh ! treat them by all means !" cried the widow. " Do not think about the cost. Let them have anything they like. Let them eat, and drink, and shout ! I think I hear them ! And then, when Stanley is chaired through the town, followed by the crowd of devoted electors, and bowing to all around, while from every window hats and handkerchiefs are waving, and in every street bands of music are playing, and the cannon roaring, and the people shouting, and—Oh ! will it not be a joyous scene ! And then, my love," she added, addressing Amelia, " we'll have the chair covered with ribbons ; and favours in the hats and the bosoms of the people, and banners, and streamers, and triumphal arches, and wreaths extending from house to house ; and then we'll have twelve virgins dressed all in white, strew-

ing flowers in the road ; and then the balls, and then—”

“ That is,” said Stanley, “ in the event of my gaining the election.”

“ Exactly, my love ; but these things must be previously settled and prepared. It will never do at all to drive them off till the last. Besides, I feel as certain as I am of my own existence that you have but to start to succeed. Amelia and I will go and canvass ourselves, which *will* be so glorious ! ‘ For whom do you vote, my good man ? ’ Some may reply, ‘ Mr. Smith,’ or whatever the name of the opposition candidate may be. ‘ Oh ! dear me, no,’ we shall say ; ‘ you must vote for Mr. Thorn ; he’s such a dear !—such an extremely nice person ! ’ And then we’ll make the children a present, and kiss them, and—oh ! we’ll manage it, my love. But you must give us our instructions.”

“ Yes, yes, mother, yes,” said Stanley, checking the enthusiastic widow ; “ you shall have every instruction, everything shall be as you wish ; but there are certain preliminary matters, which had better be settled first.”

He and Sir William then entered into those matters seriously ; but as they were immensely too dull for the widow, she and Amelia retired, with the view of making such arrangements as were in their judgment eminently calculated to give eclat to Stanley's return.

CHAPTER XI.

IN WHICH STANLEY PREPARES TO BECOME THE
SUCCESSOR OF A PECULIARLY HONOURABLE M.P.

THE project of getting Stanley into parliament, involving, as it did, such high considerations, and opening a prospect so brilliant, was of course soon communicated by Amelia to the Captain and the General, both of whom at once resolved to call into action all their energies, with the view of ensuring success. They naturally regarded it as a thing well calculated to fix the principles and to enlarge the views of him whom they held in high esteem, and for whom they were ardently anxious to do all in their power. They saw and conversed with him frequently on the subject, and were delighted with the talent he displayed; for while he explained his political predilections with

great clearness and point, his mode of expression was peculiarly forcible and suasive.

Still he preserved a certain coldness, a distance, which neither the Captain nor the General could understand. They applied to Amelia; but all the information they could obtain from her was that he had been on some point misinformed. She at the same time begged of them earnestly to take no farther notice of the matter, assuring them that the impression would soon wear off, and be thought of no more.

Conscious, however, of the integrity of his motives, the Captain could not allow a false impression to exist: and therefore resolved to have the point cleared up.

“ My good fellow,” said he, addressing Stanley in the presence of the General, “ I may be mistaken; but there does not appear to be that warmth of feeling, that unqualified friendship existing between us which I am anxious to cultivate. If I am mistaken I shall be happy; if not, state at once and unreservedly what it is, that the thing may be explained.”

“ Captain,” said Stanley, “ as you wish me to state what it is without reserve, I will do so. I have understood that you and the General

have assumed to yourselves the office of spies upon——”

“ Spies !” exclaimed the General ; “ employ some other term.”

“ I know of no other term so applicable.”

“ Sir, I will not allow any man breathing to apply a term so opprobrious to me.”

“ I am glad,” rejoined Stanley with the most perfect coolness, “ that you consider it opprobrious, although it simply proves that men can bear to *do* that of which they cannot bear to be told.”

“ I beg that you will instantly explain,” said the General. “ I do not understand this language : it is not the tone to which I have been accustomed.”

“ It may not be, and yet I know of no other tone which, under the circumstances, ought to be assumed. Do you look upon me as a child ?”

“ I look upon you, sir, as a hot-brained, impetuous, insulting young dog, who one of these days will be called out and shot through the head. Why, my father had his eye upon me until I was fifty ! He——”

Here the General suddenly paused : he re-

collected that Stanley had no father, and on the instant extended his hand, and assured him that he had spoken without a thought, and that he would not wantonly wound his feelings for the world. He conceived that he had touched that chord which commonly vibrates with a pang through the heart, and therefore felt it acutely, being perfectly unconscious of the fact that the feelings of Stanley had not been touched at all.

“ My dear fellow,” said the Captain, as Stanley looked as frowningly as if the General’s conjecture had been correct, “ you must not misinterpret our motives. We are anxious for your welfare : you will readily believe that. On my part that anxiety may appear to be not only natural, but interested, seeing that the happiness of my child is involved ; but on the part of the General it springs from a feeling of friendship, the disinterested purity of which cannot be impugned. You must not suppose that because we manifest that anxiety, we come under the harsh denomination of spies.”

“ That is all very well,” replied Stanley ; “ but I hate to have my actions watched : not,

I would have you understand, that I am ashamed of those actions, but because it not only displays a want of confidence, but places me at once in the position of a fool. That which I detest is its going forth to the world that I require to be sharply looked after, as if I were, forsooth ! an idiot or a child. It is the publication of that to the world of which I more especially complain."

" But we have never published this to the world."

" It has been published. It is the common talk even of the servants."

" The servants !" said the Captain with a smile. " I'll not for a moment suppose that you attach the least importance, or even pay the slightest attention, to the common talk of servants. But come, come, don't let us pursue this subject, I beg of you to believe that our object is not to annoy you by any unnecessary display of anxiety, but, on the contrary, to cultivate a friendly, an affectionate feeling, and to promote your happiness by all the means at our command."

The proposal to drop the subject at the time

met Stanley's views, for he had certainly no desire to have it known that he had derived his information from Bob. Not another word was therefore said about the matter: the Captain at once turned to the task he had proposed, that of convincing Stanley of the expediency of adopting those political principles to which he and the General adhered. But Stanley experienced great difficulty in making up his mind. His bias was decidedly in favour of those principles; but Sir William, by whom he was disposed to be guided, was on the opposite side. Circumstances, however, by which political decisions are invariably governed, led him to decide at once against his own bias, and therefore in favour of Sir William's views.

Mr. Trueman, a friend of Sir William, wishing to retire from public life altogether, was about to apply for the very last office which M.P.'s in general are disposed to accept, and the very first which ministers, if they have any patriotic feeling or generosity in them, are anxious to confer upon a political opponent. This office, which is one of those sinecures that have not even yet been abolished, is called the Chiltern

Hundreds. It is not in itself very lucrative, but it has been nevertheless the foundation of many fortunes : many have in consequence been raised to the baronetage of England, and many moreover to the peerage. Promotion, however it must as a matter of common justice be stated, was not the object of Mr. Trueman. He was a gentleman whose party had treated him with the most glaring ingratitude ; indeed so extremely base had been their conduct, that all virtuous persons will admit that it ought to be held up to universal execration.

For two and twenty years he had been a member of the Imperial Parliament. He had never been known to take an active part in any debate, or to be absent from any important division ; nor during the whole of his brilliant career did he ever give the slightest offence to his constituents,—there being the most perfect unanimity of principle and feeling amongst them,—an extraordinary fact, which was probably attributable, in some slight degree, to the circumstance of the constituency of the highly-gifted borough he had had for six consecutive parliaments the honour to represent, consisted

of a peculiarly thick set hedge, and two barns of remarkable antiquity. But even when his constituents became more numerous, by virtue of a memorable Act, he might have defied them to charge him with any desertion of principle, consistency being a thing upon which he prided himself especially, and which was indeed quite incapable of being assailed. He invariably voted with his party. If even any remarkably rich vein of reasoning happened to seduce him into the belief that his political friends must be wrong, he would stick to them still with the most admirable tenacity, repudiating all faith in the soundness of his own judgment, rather than consent on any point to desert them. He was indeed in this respect immutable: he felt, and very naturally, that he had but one course to pursue, that of following his leader through thick and thin; and from that neither arguments, fears, nor entreaties, could ever induce him to swerve. At the period of his marriage he was wedded to his political principles, and his faithful adherence to them was probably attributable more to a fond regard for the memory of her from whom he had imbibed them,

than to any very powerful conviction of their purity and practical virtue. The fruit of this marriage was a son ; but his principles yielded no fruit : they were at all events barren to him. They might, had he trimmed but a trifle, have been productive ; but he was far too firm a supporter of his party to render it necessary for the slightest attention to be paid to his claims. His estate was barely sufficient for his support in the style to which he had ever been accustomed, and he therefore had a highly correct paternal anxiety about a handsome provision for his son ; but there were always at that interesting period of British history so many patriots whose adherence had in some way or other to be secured, that there was never a particle of patronage left for those upon whom the most perfect reliance could be placed. His son had been waiting for years for an appointment ; but it regularly enough happened that whenever a vacancy occurred which would have suited him in every particular to a hair, it was filled up at once by some other young gentleman having a prior claim, of course, while he remained at home living in

idleness and hope, "promise-crammed," indeed, but with as sombre a prospect of an appointment as it is, perhaps, possible for the human imagination to conceive.

This was the ingratitude of which Mr. Truman complained; and it certainly was very flagrant and very base; it was this which eventually tired him out; and as he indignantly communicated to Sir William his firm determination to throw up his seat in disgust, it was arranged between them that the fact should not be publicly known until Stanley was ready to start.

"Well, now really," exclaimed the widow, when Sir William, who dined with her now almost daily, had at table explained the whole affair, "how very admirable! Why, we have the game in our own hands! Not a creature will know a word about it till our arrangements are complete! What could have been more fortunate or more delightful!"

"There is one slight difficulty to surmount," observed Sir William, "which is, that in order to secure your return, you must be on the popular side."

“Will that be essential to success?” inquired Stanley, “seeing that we have the start?”

“Why, it may not be positively essential, it is true; but by taking that side you will be much more safe.”

“Oh, be on the safe side, my dear!” cried the widow, inspired with a patriotic spirit. “Whatever you do, my love, be on the safe side.”

“But,” said Amelia, “will he not thereby violate his principles?”

“Dear me, of what possible importance is that! I have heard it asserted again and again that in politics persons never dream of allowing principle to stand in the way of interest! It is really quite ridiculous to think of such a thing. It is not to be expected. I am sure I have heard that nobody does it, or at least that they who do are perfect idiots, and Stanley is not an idiot, my love: no, thank Heaven, he is not an idiot.”

This, of course, was unanswerable: it settled the point at once, and Amelia, whom it effectually silenced, listened most attentively

to the reasoning by which Sir William sought to prove the expediency of adopting the course he had suggested.

“Besides, my dear,” interposed the widow, when Stanley was on the point of yielding; “what is the great object proposed? Is it not to obtain a seat in Parliament? Of course. Ought you not then to adopt those principles by which alone that object is certain to be secured? Why beyond all dispute. The safe side, my love, is the side for me. None can rationally hope to succeed who are not on the safe side.”

“Well,” said Stanley, when an infinite variety of equally sound and substantial arguments had induced him to determine in favour of that which was deemed the safe side; “and how about the qualification?”

“Oh that,” replied Sir William, “can be easily managed.”

“But—three hundred a-year landed property, is it not?—*I* possess no landed property!”

“Well, but you can you know, my love,”

said the widow. "There will be no real difficulty at all about that."

"That will be quite unnecessary," said Sir William; "you can possess it as others do, nominally."

"Oh!" exclaimed the widow; "but I should like him to be in the actual possession of it."

"Well, that certainly would be more correct and straightforward."

"Of course," cried Stanley, who wished that three thousand a year had been required, "and then they *can* raise no objection."

"It is always better," said Sir William, "when it can be conveniently managed."

"Oh," cried the widow, "it can be done without the slightest inconvenience in the world!"

"Very well. Then when will you start?"

"At once," replied Stanley. "The sooner the better. We'll settle the whole of the preliminaries, arrange every thing likely to give us an advantage, and then the thing can be publicly announced."

This was agreed to, and the remainder of

the evening was passed, on the one hand, by Stanley and Sir William in marking out the details of the course to be pursued ; and on the other, by Amelia and the widow in perfecting the plans they had previously conceived, and which were now about to be carried into actual execution.

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CHAPTER XII.

THE CANVASS.

ALL were now on the *qui vive*. Stanley was cramming for his political debut; Sir William was in constant communication with Mr. Truman and the agents; the Captain and the General were making all the interest in their power, while Amelia and the widow were deriving from all quarters all sorts of information touching the task they themselves had undertaken to perform.

Their first object was to purchase an estate for Stanley near the borough in question; but as that was at the time impracticable, they engaged a furnished mansion for six months in the immediate vicinity, and lived in magnificent style. The ladies were indefatigable. There was scarcely a tradesman in the place to

whom they failed to extend their patronage, while to almost every charitable institution in the county they sent munificent donations in the name of Stanley, until "Stanley Thorn" was in the mouth of every man, woman and child. The name became extremely popular: every one was inquiring about Stanley Thorn, and poetically descanting upon his manifest wealth and unbounded benevolence; for, of course, they had no conception of his object, that having been kept wisely a most profound secret.

At length the time for open action arrived: the writ was moved for, and the canvass commenced; and on the following day an opponent was in the field canvassing with corresponding energy.

Both candidates were unknown to the constituency, and hence their characters as portrayed by their respective supporters were, of course, extremely striking. Two more distinctly astonishing men never breathed. Their talents were of the highest order possible, while their hearts were so good, their principles so sound, their motives so particularly disinte-

rested, their aspirations so excessively pure, that it seemed to be almost a pity to place them in a position to be contaminated by the ordinary people of this sublunary sphere. But, on the other hand, there never were, in the view of their respective opponents, two such hideous monsters crawling upon the face of the great globe. They were by far the most atrocious, the most corrupt, the most venal, the most unprincipled persons in nature ; they were political villains, liars, swindlers, assassins ; there never were such wretches ; there never were such brutes ! in short, as every thing was left to the imagination, which revelled delightfully, and with the most perfect freedom, it soon became utterly impossible for the mind of man to conceive the legitimate extent of their political delinquencies : albeit, they had both about as much real knowledge of politics as might have been attributed to the children in the wood.

The character of a candidate, however, was a thing to which the majority of the electors attached no importance. The constituency of this enlightened borough was divided into two distinct classes : the dependent electors, who

were compelled to vote to order, and those who were so really independent that they felt themselves at liberty to vote for him who promised the most, and paid the best. In both cases principle was merged in interest; which is certainly one of the most beautiful characteristics of the popular mode of exercising electoral privileges, seeing that it renders it perfectly unnecessary for electors in the aggregate to trouble their heads about politics at all. Nor is it merely unnecessary; it is even worse than useless, inasmuch as they who do think for themselves,—which is a great deal of trouble, and people really ought to appreciate more highly than they do the unequivocal politeness of those who are at all times willing to relieve them of that trouble,—cannot act upon their own judgment, which renders its formation mere labour in vain, and hence in all such cases it is manifest that the people ought to look at the thing as a matter with which they have no more to do than to be guided by those who have infinitely more time than they have or can have to view the conflicting ramifications of State

policy, the study of which forms the chief business of their perfectly patriotic lives.

Here, however, the independent electors were in the ascendant: they formed by far the stronger body, and constituted, therefore, the more interesting class: and, oh, how sweet are the feelings of an independent man! how clear are his views, how noble his aspirations! who will dare to coerce *him*! He is a man; he strongly feels that he is a man, a really free man,—a Briton! He takes his vote to the best market. He is not basely bound to give it to this man or to that. No! it is his own property; he feels it to be so; he knows it, and he makes the most of it. And who shall impugn his right? Who shall attack the rights of property? They must be held inviolable. As the sacred character of property forms the very basis of civilization, down tumbles civilization pell mell if this, its legitimate base, be removed. Perish the principles which tend to subvert the rights of property! They are the most pernicious that can spread. If once they are permitted to stalk through the land unmuzzled, away will go our social

system, mingled—in the vilest and most sanguinary manner mingled,—with chaotic heaps of revolutionary dust. But for the inviolable character of property, England, the land of the free, the envy of surrounding empires, the wonder of the world,—for the integrity of whose glorious institutions so many thousands of aspiring and noble hearts have bled, and so many thousands more are ready to bleed, would be one of the most rascally nations upon earth. The security of property is the palladium of our liberties. It is the great, the glorious thing!—the very thing!—the thing to which more real importance should be attached than to any other thing under Heaven; for, unless it be universally recognized and upheld, the British empire must crumble like touchwood into dust. And who that perceives how essential to the due preservation of our rights and privileges as Britons it is that property should be held inviolable,—who that perceives that if it be *not*, ruin, grim ruin, will stride through the land, kicking everything down right and left in its progress, —can fail to perceive that to impugn the right

of men who possess that property which is involved in the franchise,—more especially as in thousands upon thousands of instances a vote is the only property a man does possess,—is directly to assail the sacred character of that which forms the real foundation of England's glory? Of course, many superficial persons will contend that a vote is a species of property which ought not to be sold; but in the view of these really independent electors, how absurdly untenable did this position appear! how ridiculously rotten! They argued thus:—A vote either is property or it is not. That is perfectly clear; and equally clear is it that according to the Constitution, a man either is master of that property or he is not. If then a vote is property, and a man be the master of that property, it legitimately follows that he is at liberty to sell it if he likes; if, on the other hand, it be not property *bonâ fide*, but merely property in trust, of what intrinsic value is a vote to its possessor? But is it not monstrous to talk about its being a property in trust in a great commercial country like this! Is it not given to a man

expressly in order that he may do what he likes with it? Very well then: when he sells it, he does do what he likes with it; and thereby performs his part of the contract. The whole thing resolved itself to this; and, although it is not even yet universally admitted or understood, it was understood and highly appreciated by the independent electors of the borough in question. They held votes to be their own personal property; and in order that they might sell it to the best possible advantage, they formed themselves into independent associations, and, working in a body, held back till the last, which was a highly correct and most excellent plan, because parties were then so equally divided, that towards the close of the poll, the value of votes increased immensely; indeed, it then became a question with each candidate how much it would be worth his while to give for the purpose of securing his return, which could then be secured beyond all doubt by purchasing the personal property of this enlightened lot.

Under these refreshing circumstances it at once became manifest that the independen

part of the constituency need not be canvassed at all; that they might safely be left to the management of an agent by whom they were all known, to be treated with in the event of their patriotic services being absolutely essential to Stanley's success.

The canvass, therefore, embraced the dependent electors chiefly, and it was amazing how unanimous they were in favour of Stanley, according to the ingenious gentlemen whom his committee employed. Oh, there could be no doubt at all about his return. That was placed beyond the pale of dispute. They never before met with so much enthusiasm. Their success was beyond all conception. The anxiety of the electors to record their votes in his favour, was, indeed, truly marvellous!

Amelia and the widow took the principal tradesmen. They were canvassing daily, from ten till four, and by virtue of extravagant purchases and promises of future patronage—which could not by any means come under the denomination of bribery,—they were very successful.

Having gone satisfactorily through this list, they took up one which was deemed the most hopeless : it was that of the mechanics who were known to be coerced by the opposition, and whose support could not, therefore, be reasonably expected. Success, however, had made the widow bold. She felt sure of surmounting every obstacle then : she would not hear of the possibility, in any case, of failure, but contended, that if even she and Amelia could not induce them to vote for Stanley, they could, at all events, prevail upon them not to vote at all.

The morning they started on this expedition, they repudiated the carriage : not with the view of assuming an air of humility ; on the contrary, they were dressed with unusual elegance, and had their purses unusually well filled, having a high appreciation of that beautiful maxim : *Amour fait beaucoup, mais argent fait tout.*

The first place at which they called was a cottage, in the occupation of a mechanic named Sims, and as they approached, three children, who were sitting upon the threshold,

—the eldest of whom was performing the character of governess to her brother and sister, who represented scholars,—started up with the most perfect expression of surprise within the memory of the oldest inhabitant.

“Is your father at home, my little dears?” inquired the widow.

“Mother! mother! mother!” exclaimed the children in a breath, their eyes and mouths being still very widely extended, and their mother, who had been preparing her husband’s meal, was in an instant at the door.

“Mr. Sims,” said the widow, with a fascinating smile, “is he within?”

“N—no, ma’am,” replied the poor woman, curtsying very respectfully, and feeling very nervous. “He’s at work, ma’am; but he’ll be home to his dinner, ma’am, in about ten minutes.”

“We’ll wait till he returns, if you’ll allow us.”

Mrs. Sims again curtsyed, placed two wooden chairs in an eligible position, and tremblingly dusted them with her apron, while

the children, with the utmost caution, glided into a corner, where they stood in a group with their fingers in their mouths, glancing timidly at the ladies.

“Those are *your* sweet children, I presume?” observed the widow. “Come here, my little dears : come ! do not be afraid !”

The children looked as if they really could not help it : they did, however, eventually approach, and the widow fondled them all with great affection.

“Why,” said the widow, “you must be very happy in this sweet little place, and with so fine a little family ?”

“Yes, ma’am, thank Heaven, we’re pretty comfortable, considering the place is rather too large for our things, ma’am, but that we can’t help. My husband’s obliged to live here for a vote.”

“Then you anticipate the object of our visit ?” said the widow. “You are aware that it is to solicit that vote ? Do you know on which side Mr. Sims means to go ?”

“I don’t exactly know, ma’am, but I think he is to vote for Mr. Swansdown.”

“ Oh ! but Mr. Thorn is the popular candidate ! ”

“ Is he, ma’am ? ”

“ Oh, dear me ! yes : he’s so charming a person, so elegant, so talented, and means to do so much good, you can’t think ! You’ll be delighted to see him. He is so excessively clever. Mr. Sims really must vote for him. ”

“ I’m afraid he must go on the other side, ma’am. ”

“ Good gracious ! You astonish me ! Why ? ”

“ Because the gentleman he works for will be on that side. ”

“ That cannot possibly be of the least importance : it cannot possibly follow, that, because the employer of Mr. Sims will vote for Mr. Swansdown, Mr. Sims should therefore vote for Mr. Swansdown too ? ”

“ I don’t understand much about it, ma’am, of course, but he has always been obliged to do so. ”

“ Oh ! but you know that’s excessively wrong : it is very wrong indeed for employers thus to influence the employed ; because, you see, it destroys all freedom of election ! which

is dreadful, you know: besides the practice is expressly forbidden by law. I must talk to him on this great point, and you must talk to him too: we must show him that he is not a free agent if he permits himself thus to be coerced and led away."

"Here he is, ma'am," observed Mrs. Sims, as her husband, with a thoughtful aspect, entered.

The widow turned and bowed to him, as Sims removed his cap and informed her that he was her servant.

"Mr. Sims," said the widow, "we have called to solicit your vote for Mr. Thorn."

"I am sorry," replied Sims, respectfully. "I would give it with pleasure, but I must vote on the other side."

"Indeed! Well, you are a good creature to be sorry: it proves that at heart you are in favour of Mr. Thorn."

"I don't know the gentleman, but I agree with his principles."

"How is it, then, that you must not vote for him, Mr. Sims?"

"Because, to speak plain, ma'am, my interest won't let me."

“ Dear me, how very odd ! But is it correct, Mr. Sims, either morally or politically, to sacrifice principle to interest.”

“ Why, it mayn’t be, ma’am, certainly it mayn’t; but I’ve got a young family, ma’am, and in justice to them I mayn’t act upon any fine notions.”

“ But you will thereby benefit your family. We will make it worth your while, Mr. Sims.”

Sims shook his head doubtfully.

“ You do not question our sincerity, Mr. Sims ?”

“ Not the least, but what’s to recompense me for being thrown out of work, which I should be, as sure as you’re there, ma’am, directly.”

“ That would be very sad ; it certainly would, very, very sad indeed ; but then you see, Mr. Sims, we ought always to act upon our principles.”

“ Perhaps we ought, ma’am ; but we mayn’t always do it.”

“ Oh, but virtue, you know, always meets its reward !”

“ And in cases like mine, that reward is starvation.”

“Not so, Mr. Sims. We would not only immediately remunerate you for your services, but in the event of your being in consequence dismissed, I am sure that Mr. Thorn, who is one of the best and kindest persons breathing, would feel himself in honour bound to do something for you.”

“The promises of gentlemen is one thing, ma'am, and the keeping of them promises is another. About four years ago I depended on promises, and voted on your side, and what was the consequence? Why, I was out of work the whole of the winter, and a bitter winter it was. I didn't earn a shilling till they wanted my vote again, and then they took me on.”

“But could you not have procured employment elsewhere?”

“I might, perhaps, if I'd left the town; but I was born here, and so was my father before me: I couldn't bear the thought of leaving.”

“Of course not; the feeling is very natural; but I must say that it is an extremely shocking thing that your vote, which is to all intents

and purposes your own, should not be exercised freely. Don't you see, Mr. Sims?"

"I do, ma'am: I do see, and have felt it to my cost. I wish that I had no vote at all."

"Why then do you register?"

"I am compelled to register by the same power as that which compels me to vote. By giving votes to poor men like me, you only give those votes to their masters: you only increase their political influence: you only give them additional power over the men they employ."

"Well, Mr. Sims, I of course regret exceedingly that you are thus situated, but I hope, still, that you will think better of it. Besides, you have not yet heard my proposal."

"Whatever you propose, ma'am, on this score, will be a proposal to ruin my family, which I can't of course agree to. I say this with respect, ma'am; I mean no offence. I don't believe that you'd do it if you knew it, but ruin would come for all that."

"Pray urge him no farther," whispered

Amelia, earnestly. "It will be dreadful if we persuade him to injure himself and family for us!"

"Oh, but my dear, that is not the way to canvass! We must not consider these things now! If we do we shall never get on!"

While these memorable observations were being delivered in a whisper, Sims correctly retired to the extreme corner of the room, which the widow no sooner perceived than she drew his wife aside, and said, "My dear Mrs. Sims, I am sure that so amiable a person as you appear to be, must have very considerable influence. Try what you can do to persuade your good husband to give us his vote. I will place in your hands twenty pounds if you can induce him to promise, as I have the utmost confidence in you; and be assured, that if, after the election, anything unpleasant should occur, you shall not be forgotten."

Twenty pounds! Fascination floated upon the very sound of such a sum. What might it not procure! It might even enable them to commence in a small way of business, and thus to be comparatively independent. Twenty

pounds ! The sum seemed so very immense that the poor woman drew towards her husband at once with rapture in her eyes and temptation on her tongue.

The widow now felt quite sure of success, and while the daughter of Eve, whom she had charmed, was endeavouring to prove the inexpediency of refusing the immense amount of money that had been offered, and placed the strongest possible emphasis upon the fact that it might be received without the slightest violation of either principle or honour, the fair canvassers were engaged in caressing the children ; and when they had adorned with satin sashes the waists of the two girls, who strutted about the room with the most exalted pride, and turning constantly as they strutted to admire the long ends which reached the ground, the widow placed a sovereign in the hands of the boy, who looked alternately at her and the wealth she had bestowed, with an expression of the most intense amazement.

The conference between Sims and his wife, both of whom, while enforcing their respective views, were extremely energetic, was soon at





an end, and the result was that Sims refused to yield.

“I am sorry,” said he, “I am very sorry, ladies, that I am compelled to vote against my inclination ; but I know what the consequence will be so well, that I dare not do it. I hope Mr. Thorn will succeed ; I hope he will, ladies, sincerely ; but as far as I, myself, am concerned, it is of no use—I *must* vote against him.”

This was conclusive. The firmness with which this decision was pronounced, convinced the widow that nothing could shake his resolution, and, therefore, after many expressions of regret on both sides, she prepared to take leave. Amelia, however, before she quitted the place, drew the poor woman aside, and generously presented her with five sovereigns, which she accepted and acknowledged with tears of gratitude.

“God bless you, lady !” she exclaimed. “I will teach my children to pray for you. May He protect you for ever ?”

This was a very poor beginning. It tended to daunt the enthusiasm of both. Amelia began

to consider whether any possible circumstances could justify the practice of tempting poor persons to entail wretchedness and ruin upon themselves, and soon arrived at the conclusion that no justification could be found. This conclusion she immediately communicated to the widow, who contested it warmly, on the ground of its adoption being utterly inexpedient; but Amelia urged it so zealously, and with so much force and feeling, that she eventually so far prevailed as to induce a suspension of operations until the point had been deliberately settled at home.

As they passed through the town on their return, they met Bob and his venerable friend, by whom they were informed that the Captain, accompanied by General and Miss Johnson, had arrived, which delighted them both, and they hastened to join them.

Bob had been extremely useful. He had ferreted out the deep designs of the independent electors, and had felt their pulse with really admirable tact. He knew the whole of their movements, attended all their meetings, and reported progress with great discrimination; and

while he felt that his services were highly appreciated, he had not the slightest doubt they would be handsomely rewarded.

The hope of reward, however,—although truth induces the confession, that that was very lively and strong,—was not the spur to which his zeal and activity were principally attributable. He gloried in the task. He felt flattered by the confidence reposed in him, and though in the garb of a mechanic, his heart swelled with pride, for he knew that, as much depended upon the judgment he displayed, his position was one of high importance.

But although he had been in great spirits, although he had succeeded to his heart's content, in the performance of the task he had undertaken, he had no one to converse with confidentially, no one to accompany him, no one to whom he could open his whole soul. He had a thousand times wished for his venerable friend, and hence, when he arrived, not only was he overjoyed to see him, but he instantly made a representation at head-quarters, which secured him as an auxiliary, and was conducting him, when he met his mistress, to a

celebrated slop-shop in the town, to purchase a jacket and an apron for the venerable gentleman, that he might accompany him also incog.

“They look rayther spicey down here, I say, don’t they?” said Bob, when Amelia and the widow had passed on.

“Werry slap,” replied the venerable gentleman. “Vot are they been arter?”

“Oh! canvassing.”

“Canwassing! vot! they canwass! Vell, vimmin is devils!”

“It only shows you vot they’ll do for their husbands.”

“That’s reg’lar: so it does; they’ll do a deal for ’em, ven they’re a tidyish sort; ony, yer see, they make ’em pay werry dear for their dewotion.”

“But vot I look at most, is, they don’t stick at nothing; they’ll go through fire and water to serve you.”

“So they vill, ven you get ’em to bite; but even then, you know, there’s allus two sides to a penny: look at both and you’re safe to find one of ’em a voman. That’s the p’int: cos a voman is a voman all over the world. Still I

agrees vith you reg'lar, that ven they do take, they sticks like lobsters to business ; but that ain't the p'int: many on 'em looks arter number vun, vich leads them as is tied to 'em werry rum lives. They're safe to sarve you out, you know, in some way or 'nother."

"Ah, but I like to see a woman, you know, as 'll go through anything for her husband."

"So do I ! It's a interesting sight, and that's vere they gets over you ! But if you look at the thing fillysophocle, you'll find that their charges for this is werry heavy."

They now reached the slop-shop, and when the proprietor had suited the venerable gentleman to a hair, Bob took him to the head quarters of the independents, where they had a pint of ale and ascertained that there was to be a grand meeting that evening at seven.

"Vot sort of buffers is them hindependents?" inquired venerable Joe.

"They're swells," replied Bob, "which votes for them as pays the best."

"Werry reg'lar," said the venerable gentleman, ironically. "Then in course they hare warmant."

“You’ll say so, when you see ’em.”

“I says so now! No woter as sells his wote ought to have a wote to sell. They ought all to be hexpunged, cos it’s wenal corruption.”

“But s’pose it’s reg’lar?”

“So much the vusser. It don’t ought to be! Vot is votes for? That’s the p’int. Ain’t they for to be guv to the best man? And how can that be, if they are sold like red herrings?”

“But in a place like this here, where it’s done, you know, so reg’lar and deliberate, it makes all the odds!”

“Not a ha’perth. It only shows yer that rotten wenality is ketching. D’yer think now, if I was a genelman, I’d buy up the wotes of the wagabones?”

“If you didn’t, the t’other buffer would, mind yer, that’s where you’d feel it. S’pose you was a ‘genelman which wanted to get into parliament. Very well. Here’s a mob of swells here, which can do the trick for you, and if you don’t buy ’em up you don’t get in at all. Now, then, wouldn’t you do it, providin’ it wos reg’lar?”

“Not a bit of it! I’ll tell you vot I’d do: I’d go to the t’other genelman comforble and quiet, and I’d say, Mr. Vot’s-yer-name, ve’re a conflicting together in this here business. Werry well, that’s no hods; may the best man vin. Now look here: there’s a squaddy of wagabones, vich vonts to sell their wotes, vich is werry onreg’lar, and don’t ought to be. Werry vell. Now, I’ll tell yer vot I’ll do vith yer; I’ll give yer my verd, vich in course is as good as my bond, that if you don’t buy up these here warmant, I von’t. Vot’s the consequence? Vy, in course, they’d hold back till the last, a expectin’, an’ expectin’, an’ expectin’ to be bought at their own walleation, an’ at the close of the poll, the whole b’ilin’ ud be done just as brown as a berry.”

“That wouldn’t be a bad move, mind you!”

“It’s the only vay to sarve ’em. They’d be so blessed vild they’d be fit to punch their heads off.”

“Blowed, if I don’t name it to master!” cried Bob. “It’s a out and out move.”

And so it was in the abstract: nothing could be better. The conception did the venerable

gentleman great credit. But he thought of the conduct of the principals only. He overlooked the fact that each candidate had a committee whose object was to ensure success, and who were not very scrupulous as to the means. It was possible that the candidates themselves would agree to a proposition of the kind, and would feel themselves bound to adhere to the compact ; but the probability was, that towards the close of the poll, the committee, in the plenitude of their enthusiasm, would violate that compact in order to make all sure.

It was precisely in this light that Stanley and his immediate friends viewed the proposition when suggested by Bob, in the full conviction of its being hailed with loud applause. Their view of the case, however, was not explained to him. Unwilling to diminish his value by reducing his manifest self-importance, they told him that he was an extremely clever fellow ; that the thing should be considered in committee ; and that it was highly essential still to watch the movements of the patriots, and to report the very moment he heard of any offer having been made by the opposite

side ; the whole of which had great weight with Bob, who still imagined that the suggestion would of course be adopted.

During this conference, Venerable Joe was arraying himself in his masquerade dress ; and, as he blackened his beard with burnt cork, and soiled his jacket and apron with soot, he looked, when his toilet was complete, like a highly respectable tinker.

Bob, whose habiliments were somewhat more tidy, did not quite approve of the *tout ensemble* of his venerable friend, and he said so, and in terms which could not be mistaken ; but with all that delicacy of expression and tone, by which his delivery was distinguished in common.

The venerable gentleman, however, contested the point with great eloquence.

“I study natur’,” said he. “The dress is nat’ral : verehas it voodn’t be no how nat’ral if it looked as if I’d dressed for the part ! that’s the p’int. Look ear : you go to the play, and you see a willage scene. Werry well. The pheasants is all dressed reg’lar, with werry tight smalls, leetle jackets, and pumps, cuttin’ away

like ingey rubber, and sportin' werry well developed calves. Is this nat'ral? Ain't it heven, as fur as the dress is consarned, a werry bad imitation of natur'? Is pheasants got calves? Not a hindividual one upon the face of the blessed earth. They've got no calves at all—not the men: their calves all runs down right away into their boots; and as for dancing! they do dance like helephants; they're werry heavy coaches; the music, mind yer, must be cruel slow: they seem built hexpress to go along with the Old Hunderth: all vich proves werry clear to me that ven people attempts for to dress for a part, they ought to study natur'."

Bob, perceiving the force of this analogy yielded; and, at the appointed hour, they went forth to meet the Independents.

On their arrival, they found the room crowded, and all seemed exceedingly anxious to ascertain if any offer from either side had been made. The business of the evening had not yet commenced: they were waiting with great impatience for Mr. Jonathan Boggles, a respectable blacksmith, and a member of the

committee, who, conscious of his importance, was invariably late. He did, however, eventually arrive, and his presence was hailed with enthusiastic cheering.

“Chair! chair! chair! Mr. Boggles in the chair!” shouted the Independents simultaneously.

Mr. Boggles, however, sat with great humility near the door, until the question had been put and unanimously carried, when, with a show of reluctance, which did him great credit, for it seemed to proceed from a knowledge of his own unworthiness, he took possession of the chair amidst shouts of applause.

Every eye was now upon him: the anxiety which prevailed was most intense; and Mr. Boggles having, with due deliberation, passed his blue cotton handkerchief three distinct times across his highly-intellectual brow, called with infinite presence of mind, for a pint, and a pipe, and a screw.

Another wild exclamation of “Chair!” burst from the impatient patriots; but Boggles sat with appropriate tranquillity until the pint, and the pipe, and the screw had been produced,

when he majestically rose ; and as the most breathless silence pervaded the room, he was heard by all to say,

“ Gents, we arn’t heered noth’n.”

This important announcement seemed to remove from the minds of all a load of suspense, albeit beyond that it clearly afforded no pleasure ; but as Mr. Boggles subsequently intimated, with all his characteristic conciseness, that he should be happy to hear any gentleman deliver his sentiments on the all-absorbing point, a patriot of some importance rose, and let the following eloquence loose :

“ Brother townsmen : You’ve heered what the cheerman has said together, and yow knoo what to think on’t as well as I can tell ’ee ; but if aither party thinks we shall move from our ground, they never was greater mistaken. [*Loud cheers.*] We beant a-going’ to do noth’n’ of the sourt. [*Renewed cheering.*] I knoo what they are a-waitin’ for together ; they’re a-waitin’ to see which side we shall lane on ; but we beant a-goin’ to lane on noo side. [*Applause.*] What’s it matter to us which gets in ? What’ll aither on ’em do for us ? Noth’n’. Why should

we put ourselves out o' the way then for them ? If they have us they must drop someth'n' handsome : if they won't, they don't have us. [*Much cheering.*] We're not unreasonable together. We only want as much as we can get : we want noth'n' more. If we can have more from one than we can from the other, shouldn't we be fools not to take it ? Why should we make any sacrifice for them ? Would they make a mite o' sacrifice for us ? Wouldn't they see us rot first ? They're sure to have us. We've the power in our own hands, and we beant to be done. If naither offers noth'n, then comes our turn : we'll offer ourselves to Thorn, who's a-rollin' in riches, and if he doon't give what we want, he's the one to be punished : we'll wait till just the last, and then go up together and swamp him."

While the loud applause which honoured the conclusion of this oration was rushing through the circular ventilators, Bob and his venerable friend held a confidential conference touching the scheme, which they had previously deemed excellent, but which they now clearly perceived would be utterly ineffectual. He was therefore

impatient to communicate this highly important fact to his master, and in the glow of his zeal was about to leave at once for that purpose ; but his venerable friend detained him by suggesting the extreme probability of other points of importance being started ; and several speeches followed, tending to illustrate the justice as well as the expediency of making Stanley the victim in the event of any "swindle" being attempted.

When this point had been carried *nem. con.* a rough red-headed genius rose to direct public attention to a general view of the matter.

"It has been stated," said he, "in the coorse of this discussion, that it doon't matter a boot'n to *us* as individuals which party gets in. I go further, and say it doon't matter a boot'n to the coountry at large, cause there's just six o' one and half a dozen o' the other. This coountry is' goin' right under the table, [*hear ! hear !*] and noth'n can save it boot a roarin' revolution ! [*Loud cheering.*] And what 'ud be the consequence of sooch a revolution, which soom weak-minded pipples dread ? What 'ud be the consequence, I say ? Suppose the whoole

coountry wor in flames, and every thing in it burnt to ashes! Is plenty of work good for the coountry? Is good wages good for the coountry? If so, a revolution would be good for the coountry! And why? See what general employ it 'ud cause!—see what work there'd be to build it all up again!—see what wages poor men would have then! I'll tell you what together, I'm for making all level, and beginnin' again fresh!"

This generous sentiment was most enthusiastically applauded by all present, with the exception of Venerable Joe, who was the proprietor of sundry small houses, and with whose private interests the adoption of so sweeping a measure of reform would in consequence seriously interfere. He therefore intimated to Bob—who made it a point of discretion to applaud every speech—that he was about to reply to the red-headed gentleman; and although Bob endeavoured to dissuade him, by pointing out distinctly that such a proceeding would not be safe under the circumstances, he would not be turned from his purpose. He therefore rose, and the moment he had done so,

there was a general whisper of "Who's he? D'yow know him? Who's he?"

"I've riz," said the venerable gentleman with great deliberation, "to hanser a hobservation wot dropped from the hendiidual vich 'ad the honour to speak last. My hobject is for to say but a werry few vords; and fustly, I vish to arst him how, if he 'ad property, he'd like to have it knocked o' th' head in that there soort o' vay as he speaks on?"

"D'yow think," cried the red-headed patriot, "I wouldn't sell it afore the glory began?"

"But s'pose," pursued the venerable gentleman, "s'pose——"

"Down! down! down!" exclaimed twenty of the Independents in a breath. "Turn him out! Turn him out! He is not one of us! He's a traitor!—a spy! Turn him out!"

In an instant the room was in an uproar. Bob scarcely knew whether to withdraw his friend at once, or to fight through it, seeing that a strong disposition to do battle was becoming very manifest. The venerable gentleman wished to explain: he was very energetic in the expression of this wish; but no! nothing

could induce them to hear him. He was a traitor!—they would have him out!—and were just on the point of proceeding to violence, when Bob, who would have struck down the first man that touched him, started up, and cried, “Leave him to me!” with an air of so much desperation, that they who were about to assail him stood off.

“Now, old genelman,” said Bob, winking slightly at his venerable friend, who understood it, “your conduct is very onregular. March, —afore I take you by the scruff of the neck.”

The venerable gentleman deemed it highly correct to make a show of resistance, when Bob at once seized him by the collar, and with great apparent violence forced him from the room amidst thunders of applause.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE NOMINATION.

WHEN the expressed determination of the independent band had been communicated by Bob to the committee, they knew at once how to proceed; for as Stanley was to be the first candidate applied to, only in the event of no proposal to purchase being made, it was clearly expedient to wait for such application, as the value of property, and more especially that peculiar species of property, so varies by circumstances, that in general a difference of something like a hundred per cent fluctuates between an offer to buy and an offer to sell.

Bob was therefore instructed to keep an extremely sharp eye upon the patriots still; and, stimulated by the applause lavished upon him

for his vigilance, he continued to watch them with indefatigable zeal, albeit deprived of the companionship of his friend, through that venerable gentleman's unhappy indiscretion.

From day to day, as no offer from either party had been made, the anxiety of the independent people increased ; for although they possessed intact the power to punish either of the candidates, and thereby to have their revenge, they did not—looking at the thing in a purely commercial point of view—prefer that revenge, however sweet *per se*, to the more substantial coin of the realm ; which was indeed extremely natural, as well as very provident, inasmuch as the majority of them having an appropriate contempt for the meanness of labour, lived in an enviable state of independence from year to year upon the golden produce of their electoral rights. Their indignation at the backwardness of those who had come forward can therefore astonish no right-minded man, nor is it surprising that on the day of nomination they should have become so incensed at the ungenerous, unjust, and ungentlemanlike behaviour of the candidates, that they resolved to show him whom they con-

ceived to be the richer, and therefore the more reprehensible of the two, that they were not with impunity to be swindled.

Now, although philosophical persons may carp at the novel knowledge about to be imparted, it may be held to be highly necessary that all the civilised nations of the earth should know, that in England, previously to the conscientious votes of a constituency being recorded, the candidates have to go through a sound constitutional ordeal, involving the high and indisputable privilege of pelting, and hooting, and yelling at those candidates,—a privilege which forms one of the most characteristic and strongly-developed features of pure liberty with which a perfectly free and enlightened people can be blessed. That the glorious process of nomination throws a halo of security around our sacred institutions is a fashionable fact, plainly demonstrable by our very adherence to that process, and that the speeches delivered on that interesting occasion are essential to the existence of a good understanding between candidates and electors, is abundantly proved by the mere circumstance of those speeches being made. So also is

the show of hands a glorious transaction, and as valuable as it is glorious, inasmuch as it amounts to a mighty demonstration of public opinion, which is of itself so conclusive, that it is in no slight degree remarkable that in a country like this the unpopular practice of demanding a poll should be tolerated at all.

It is however true, very true, that there may exist two rational opinions about that; but it is also true that there cannot exist two opinions about this, that when on the day of nomination the returning officer had deliberately read the writ, Stanley was proposed by a locally influential person, in a most brilliant speech, of which not a single syllable could be heard beyond "Brother Electors!"—Stanley Thorn, Esquire"—"honour to represent"—"rampant faction"—"purity of election"—"the eye of Europe"—and "the last drop of blood in his veins!"

As it is just possible that it may be observed that this was rather extraordinary, considering that Stanley was the popular candidate, it will be proper to explain that the independent portion of the constituency—utterly disgusted

with the prospect of being unbought—proceeded *en masse* to the hustings, with aprons, hats, and pockets full of turnips, carrots, cabbage-stalks, potatoes, and other equally handy vegetables, with the view of giving expression to the feelings by which they were animated in a manner the most striking and effective. They hated Stanley with a most correct hate; they felt that they had, by him especially, been treated with contempt; and as contempt is about the last thing which true patriots in general are disposed to endure, they resolved *in limine* to bring him to his senses; and when they had assembled, Bob, cognizant of this high resolve, pressed with unexampled zeal through the crowd to inspire them with additional ardour. Unhappily, they did not know Stanley, and a loud cry arose from time to time of “Which is he?”—some pointing, in reply to one devoted individual, and some to another. Bob was well aware of their lamentable ignorance in this particular, and resolving to take advantage of it, rushed with great presence of mind through the mass, shouting just as the person who had nominated Stanley

retired, "Now then!—look out, brother boroughmongers!—fire!"

In an instant the hands of the independents grasped their ammunition, and as a gentleman stepped forward to second the nomination, they, mistaking him for the nominee, charged, and the air was darkened with vegetable matter.

In vain the unhappy gentleman thus assailed—being utterly unable to understand it, for he was sure that he had done nothing to offend the constituency—protested against this popular expression of public opinion; in vain the returning officer appealed to their deliberate sense of justice!—they answered by discharging fresh volleys of vegetables: they would not be influenced; their spirit could not be subdued; they were men, independent men, good men and true; in short, men who knew their rights, and would maintain them.

"Fire!—fire!" reiterated Bob. "Wot! is Britons goin' for to be slaves!"

"No!" responded the patriots in a chorus of thunder, and again their ammunition partially shut out the light.

Now, it may be well known by experienced men, that there is nothing in a siege of this character so efficient as a turnip. It requires but a powerful aim and a strictly correct eye to make it go straight to the point proposed. Carrots are all very well in their way ; but in general their flight is extremely irregular, while in unpractised hands they are apt to snap in the throwing ; but turnips pierce the air in the most steady style ; and albeit many inexperienced persons may prefer a potatoe, there seems to be no just or legitimate ground for such preference ; for a potatoe has not half the moral influence of a turnip, because it does not, in proportion to its size, carry with it half the weight.

On this occasion the turnips did great execution. They went with force and dignity at the heads of the individuals by whom the platform was crowded, and whose gestures were in consequence less graceful than grotesque. With the exception of the returning officer, who for a small man was highly indignant, not one upon the hustings dared to face the besiegers. Some, with great self-possession,

stooped down, and took a retrospective view through their legs; some witnessed the exciting scene by peeping occasionally over their shoulders; while others formed themselves into picturesque groups, each modestly striving to give the precedence to his friend by placing that friend just before him. Stanley, who enjoyed the thing exceedingly, was in a corner, properly panoplied by a beadle, who, being an excessively corpulent person, shielded him with very great effect.

The platform, of course, was soon covered with vegetables; sufficient, indeed, had been poured in to stock a metropolitan market; but Bob, perceiving that the patriots had plenty still in store, was indefatigable in his efforts to urge them on.

“Keep it up!” he cried; “never give in! Now—now, brother-boroughmongers, at him! Hurrah!—I say,” he added privately, turning to his venerable friend, “just cut away, and put missis up to it, will you, or else she’ll be fit to break her heart. There she is, with old missis, and the Captain, in the carriage.”

As the patriots, with deafening shouts,

poured in their reserved ammunition, the venerable gentleman pressed towards the carriage; and, the instant Amelia saw him, she exclaimed,

“ Joseph, for goodness sake! run to the hustings, and——”

“ Don’t be oneasy, ma’am about it,” said the venerable gentleman; “ Bob’s arrangin’ on it beautiful, ma’am, a hinsinniwater into ’em that t’other genelman is him, so as the swells may hexhorst theirselves of every hindiividual wegeble afore his master comes forrard.”

“ What was this attack intended for him?” cried the widow.

“ It vos, ma’am: it’s werry onreg’lar, but it vos.”

“ The brutes!” exclaimed the widow indignantly. “ The wretches! Where on earth are the police? Why don’t they do their duty? Run, Joseph, and tell him from me to leave the hustings this instant. Be quick, Joseph: there’s a good man!”

The venerable gentleman at once started off to deliver his message to Stanley, while the Captain was endeavouring to calm the ladies’

fears by explaining precisely the effect of Bob's *ruse*.

Stanley, however, felt that he had a great public duty to perform. He had to address the independent electors, which is so indispensable on the day of nomination, that it may with great propriety be questioned whether the wanton violation of that duty would not only ensure individual defeat, but strike at the very root of the British Constitution. It is no answer to this, nor is it a sufficient proof of the inutility of the practice, to show that of the speeches delivered on those high occasions it frequently happens that no syllable can be heard: it may be held to be distinctly and absolutely essential to the noble institutions of this country nevertheless. Individuals, it is true, may pelt. Why, let them pelt? Are free and intelligent men to be deprived of their liberties? They may drown every word—let them drown every word; are members of a civilised community to be gagged? is the public voice to be stifled? are the people of this country to be prohibited from giving full expression to the sentiments and feelings with

which they are inspired? He who would contend for the expediency of adopting such a course is no statesman. Besides, there cannot, by any possibility, be a stronger proof of the practical virtue of delivering speeches on these great occasions, in defiance of the people to whom those speeches are addressed, than that afforded by the fact that the ancient and fine constitutional custom is still adhered to by the most brilliant men of the age.

When, therefore, Mr. Swansdown had been nominated and seconded, and the whole of the vegetables had been duly discharged, Stanley came forth, and boldly faced the electors; but when the independent band perceived the error into which they had been led, when they found that they had been lavishing their favours upon the wrong man, and that they had not so much as a root of mangel-wurzel with which to honour the right one, they became at once so thoroughly disgusted with themselves that they scarcely knew how to give expression to their rage.

“Gentlemen!” said Stanley,—“gentlemen! —gentlemen!”

He could get no further. The patriots were resolved not to hear another word: they shouted, and bellowed, and yelled, and felt strongly disposed to make a rush, with a view to the restoration of their vegetable ammunition.

“ Oh! *I'm* not going to talk to these vile dirty wretches,” said Stanley, with great impropriety, addressing Sir William, who stood beside him.

“ You had better say something.”

“ Of what earthly use is it when they 'll not hear me ?”

“ Go on ; never mind : tell them how you love them : you are sure to be faithfully reported in the papers. *They'll* make a speech for you. Do but keep at it for a time, and appear to be dreadfully energetic : that's the way.”

Stanley accordingly set to work like an alarum bell, firmly determined that nothing should stop him. He shouted, and looked extremely fierce, and clenched his fist tightly, and sent in the crown of his hat, and assumed a variety of very imposing attitudes, apparently

inspired with unexampled fervour; in short, he performed his part to so much perfection that at length even the independent patriots became amazed, and wished to hear what this palpable enthusiasm was all about; but the moment this natural wish became manifest,—the moment they were sufficiently silent to hear him—he concluded by saying, in a firm, loud voice,

“It therefore follows, that if you do but your duty to yourselves, my return will be triumphant!”

Mr. Swansdown then nobly stepped forward, and the contrast between him and Stanley was striking in the extreme. Mr. Swansdown was a man of mild and gentleman-like bearing, but he was at the same time remarkably short.

“Gentlemen,” said he, at the very top of a very high voice, “I am proud——”

“Vot!” exclaimed Venerable Joe, who had stationed himself near the hustings, “air yer goin’ for to ’ear that air Leetle Lilliprushian speak ater yer voodn’t ’ear the t’ other! Look at the little swell! Vy he ’d have to clamber up

upon a cheer to scratch his blessed leetle head he's sich a werry onreg'lar leetle dodger."

"Now, my brother boroughmongers!" promptly exclaimed Bob, "three reg'lar boroughmongering groans for the Lilliprushman!"

Three groans were accordingly started, but they were drowned by the cheers of the patriotic band.

"Gentlemen!" screamed Mr. Swansdown.

"Gentlemen!" echoed Bob, with a shriek which rent the air; and, as similar echoes were established among the crowd, they produced loud and long-continued laughter.

Again Mr. Swansdown tried back, and again; but these trials had no other effect than that of exciting a spirit of emulation among the masses, for each man strove to make his echo the most perfect. And it certainly was an unfortunate voice for an eloquent public speaker; but even this was not all, for, while his tones resembled those of an indignant cockatoo, his refined articulation partook of the character of that of Demosthenes before he had recourse to the pebbles.

At length, after making a series of unsuc-

cessful attempts he was clearly inclined to give it up in disgust for the popular reflections upon his physical faculties wounded his private feelings deeply: as, however, an extremely judicious friend represented to him the absolute necessity for going on, and explained that, as these imitations were simply the development of their undoubted constitutional privileges as free and devoted Britons, they ought not to be contemned, he tried again to enlighten them; but, as the more energetic he became the more laughter he created, he had no sooner thrown them all into convulsions than he thanked them fervently for the patient and deliberate attention with which they had honoured him, complimented them highly upon the manifestation of their surpassing intellectual characteristics, and with a striking expression of gratitude, withdrew.

The awful moment now arrived for the highly-constitutional show of hands to be demanded, and all living men by whom the importance of this terrific process is appreciated properly, will admit that it is one of the most intense interest, inasmuch as the result in-

volves the dreadful responsibility of demanding a poll. On this occasion the show was decidedly ten to one in favour of Swansdown, which was very remarkable, and, being quite unexpected, had a powerful effect. Stanley, however, by no means dismayed, demanded a poll on the spot: when the masses, having given him three terrific groans, and Swansdown three highly-enthusiastic cheers, formed themselves into groups to review the chief points, and dispersed without striking a blow.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE ELECTION.

ALTHOUGH Stanley's committee had been again and again assured that no offer had been made to the independent patriots, they now felt convinced that the Swansdown party had purchased them under the rose. The show of hands had amazed them; it afforded in their view an incontrovertible proof of a purchase having been effected, and, as without the support of the patriotic band success was utterly hopeless, they naturally thought that the time had arrived for their opponents to be boldly outbid.

On the other hand, the Swansdown party were equally amazed at the mighty demonstration in their favour. They had concluded that the patriots had been secured by Stanley, and

that, therefore, they should lose the election, by means which would ensure their eventual success. Their energies had, in consequence, been devoted to the accumulation of sufficient facts to support a petition against Stanley's return; but the show of hands threw a new light upon the subject, and tended to inspire them with the conviction not only that the patriots had not been corrupted, but they had resolved to adhere firmly to those pure principles by which alone it was supposed the strict integrity of the British empire could at that particular period be maintained.

Stanley's committee, notwithstanding, at once opened a negotiation with the Independents, and assuming that their votes had already been bought, their first object was to learn the exact price at which the property had been sold. There was much tact and judgment in this, forasmuch as experience had proved to the committee that when electors have been bought by both parties, a great deal depends upon their honour, they knew that the development of that fine moral attribute could be ensured only by giving the highest

price. The patriots, however, solemnly declared that their property had not been purchased, which was repudiated at once as being utterly absurd by the committee; who, nevertheless, agreed with them as to the price, and proposed that the payment should be made when the votes had been recorded; but the patriots, exalted by the purity of their principles, spurned this proposal with flashing indignation as a direct and unwarrantable imputation upon their strictly public virtue. They would have the money down; and they had it.

The great point now to be considered was, how to secure them. This puzzled the committee for some considerable time; but at length having consulted the best authorities on the subject, they inclined to the belief that the patriots would never dream of leaving a house while they were able to procure liquor gratis, and that, therefore, on being made particularly bacchanalian, they would have no disposition to violate their honour.

A supper was accordingly provided at their own head-quarters, and, touching the liquor,

the host was instructed to let the supply at least equal the demand. This was done. A bottle of wine was placed by the side of each patriot to begin with, and jugs of ardent spirits were established at regular intervals in the most tempting manner that could be conceived. Accustomed as they had been to the liberality of candidates this display quite surprised them. It won all their hearts; and, as they partook of the wines and spirits with the most perfect freedom and with an energy which was clearly indicative of the existence of an idea that they had not a moment to lose, they soon became in a most glorious state of affectionate philanthropy. Nothing could surpass their enthusiasm in favour of Stanley. He was a prince: his health was drunk fifty times, for each patriot felt himself bound to propose it the moment he had arrived at the verge of oblivion.

Having soaked themselves up to this point with wine, rum, gin, and brandy, punch was introduced, which, being a new and unexpected feature, was ladled out with great spirit, while it drank so excessively smooth that even those

who had retained sufficient sense to suspect that they had had quite enough, were unable to resist the flowing bowl. They therefore drank, and drank, and dropped off as they drank, and as they dropped they were thrust beneath the table by the survivors, who gradually followed to a man.

When this consummation had arrived, the landlord extinguished the lights, and locked them up, and there they remained snoring snugly until eight in the morning, when Bob and his venerable friend came down with a company of musicians, who aroused them by their correct and energetic execution of "*Hail, smiling morn.*"

At first the patriots felt rather confused, and looked about as if they did not exactly comprehend the true meaning of the extraordinary state of things which then existed. The host, however, supplied them with excellent purl, and their faculties, in consequence, became somewhat clearer; indeed, before an hour had elapsed, they were enabled to entertain a faint notion that they had been at head-quarters all night, which was really very singular. Still they kept drinking the purl—it was so strong

and so refreshing—until the clock struck nine, when down came the carriages to convey them to the poll before it was possible for them to be tampered with by the Swansdown faction. Not a patriot, however, thought for a moment of deserting his colours then! They were all too happy—too glorious! “Thorn for ever!” was perpetually upon their lips. They would have voted for him for nothing if put to the test!—the purl was so good, and the music so enchanting. They were, indeed, all fervour, all enthusiasm; the excitement was delightful, and hence with joy they entered the carriages to place their votes upon record, surrounded by an enthusiastic mob of embryo patriots, and preceded by a banner, on which was inscribed in letters of gold, “THORN, AND PURITY OF ELECTION.”

This was the first grand step, and the consequence was, that at ten o'clock Stanley was eighty a-head. The moral influence of this majority was powerfully felt: at eleven it had increased to one hundred and fifty, and at twelve it had reached two hundred.

The Swansdown party perceiving that, in

order to succeed, they must make a mighty effort, now put forth the whole of their strength. The masters ran about like wild Indians to bring their men up to the poll, and so successfully were their energies brought into play, that at one o'clock Stanley's majority had been reduced to seventy-five. This was hailed as a glorious reaction ; but more glorious still was it deemed when at three o'clock Swansdown was seven a-head.

Now came the grand struggle. The excitement was hot. The supporters of each party darted from house to house in a state of intense perspiration, while the utmost anxiety pervaded the town. The agents of Swansdown would not bribe. It was amazing how immensely in their estimation the value of sundry small articles increased, and with how much avidity snuff-boxes, knives, pipes, paper-caps, sticks, and old stockings were purchased ; but nothing on earth could induce them to bribe.

At this time both parties felt sure of success, although driven to the point of desperation. Bob, acting upon instructions, secured four electors who were reeling towards the poll to

vote for Swansdown, and having, with the assistance of his venerable friend, got them into a carriage, drove out of the town. The widow saw this from the room she had engaged, and waved her handkerchief to express her admiration. She also saw, or imagined she saw, Mr. Ripstone displaying the utmost zeal in Stanley's favour; but her faculties were so much confused at the time, that on reflection she felt that she must have been deceived. Just, however, as the poll was about to close, there burst forth an enthusiastic cheer, and, on rushing to the window, she saw him again leading on half a dozen electors. She could not be mistaken: it was indeed he—the kind-hearted, dear, good soul!—she felt ready to sink into the earth. He led them boldly to the booth; they wore Stanley's colours—their votes were recorded amidst loud cheers—they were the last. The poll finally closed.

In due time the numbers were proclaimed. Stanley had triumphed!—he was fifteen a-head, and the announcement was hailed with reiterated shouts of exultation; but the result was no sooner communicated to Amelia and the

widow, who had been in a most painful state of excitement throughout the day, than they sank upon the sofa, and instantly fainted. The attendants were alarmed: they conceived that the nature of the communication had been misunderstood, and tried with zeal to bring them back to a state of consciousness in order to undeceive them; but they remained for some time insensible as statues. At length, however, by virtue of the application of restoratives their perception returned, and again they had the happiness to hear that he in whom their hearts were centred had, indeed, been victorious. And oh! with what delight they felt inspired! They embraced; and while affectionately mingling their tears of joy, each chid the other for weeping.

Another mighty shout now arose, and on reaching the window they saw Stanley thanking the electors for the zealous exertions they had made in his behalf, and how noble he looked then in the judgment of Amelia may be conceived.

A messenger was instantly despatched to urge his return to them the moment he had

concluded his address ; and as this was but a short one, he soon obeyed the summons, and by doing so deprived them of the power to utter one word of congratulation. They flew to him as he entered the room, and embraced him, and kissed him with fervour, and sobbed like children upon his breast, but they could *not* speak.

“ God bless you,” said Stanley, who felt nearly overpowered ; when, on turning to the window, he saw his opponent standing in the pillory by prescription, seeing that the electors of that enlightened borough held the process of pelting the defeated candidate to be one of their highest constitutional privileges, and they certainly did on this particular occasion exercise that privilege, not only with unexampled zeal, but without the slightest feeling of remorse, in consequence of Swansdown having dared to threaten a petition against Stanley’s return. They had, therefore, no mercy ; they pelted him with all their characteristic ardour, and continued to pelt him until he deemed it expedient to retire from the scene, when they marked his retreat with three glorious groans.

CHAPTER XV.

THE CHAIRING.

As success had been held from the commencement of the contest to be sure, the chief preliminaries for the chairing had already been accomplished; and as from the hour the poll closed until midnight, Stanley, Amelia, the widow, and the committee, were occupied in giving additional instructions, the whole arrangements for the pageant were before the time appointed complete.

The returning officer had named twelve o'clock for the official declaration of the poll, and at that hour Stanley, accompanied by the General, the Captain, and Sir William, proceeded to the Hall in an open carriage, drawn by a mob of remarkably muscular electors, and surrounded by a patriotic multitude anxious to do him all possible honour.

On arriving at the Hall, Stanley entered with his friends, and took his station upon the platform, and almost immediately afterwards the final state of the poll was declared by the returning officer, who proclaimed Stanley "duly elected;" whereupon there were loud cries of "No, no, no!" but the voices of the dissentients were drowned in the general applause that succeeded.

Stanley then came forward, and in a brief but pointed speech, in which he acknowledged the high honour conferred on him, announced it to be the "proudest day of his life," and so on; after which he gracefully offered Mr. Swansdown his hand, which was taken in a gentlemanlike spirit,—and having led him forward to address the electors, begged of them to give him a fair and impartial hearing.

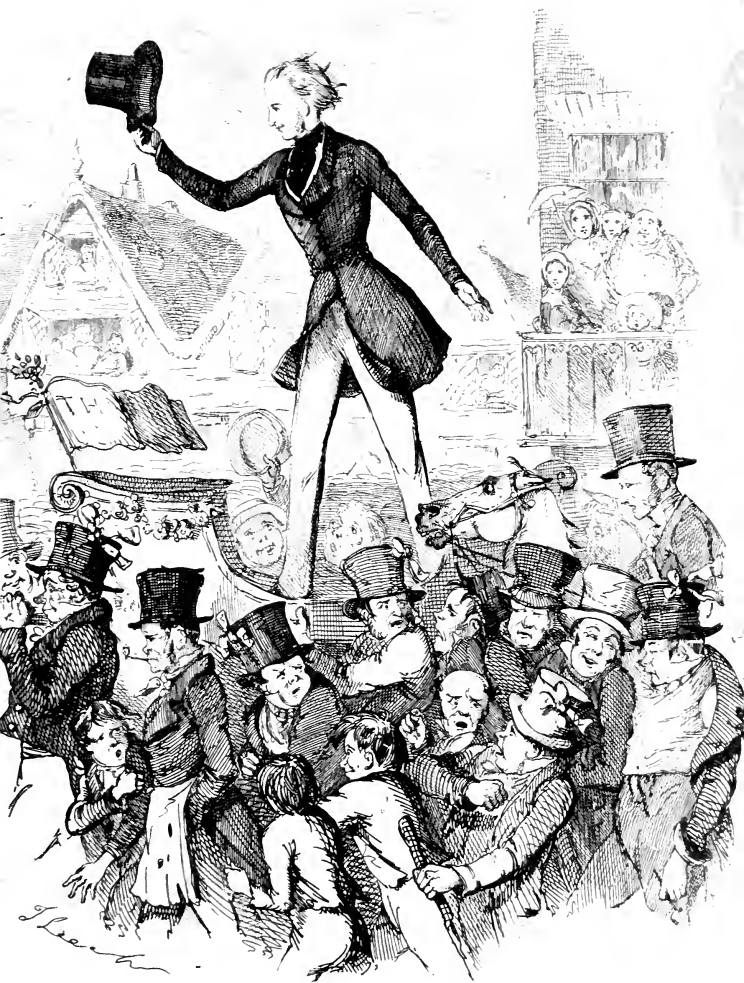
The very moment, however, Swansdown stood before them, he was assailed with the most approved expressions of popular disapprobation. They would not hear a word he had to utter. Nothing could induce them for an instant to defer the active exercise of their constitutional power to groan. They would

groan, and they did, until he became well convinced that any farther attempt to address them would be useless, when thanks were voted to the Mayor for his urbanity and general good behaviour, and amidst loud acclamations the Hall was dissolved.

Now came the great business of this memorable day. During the official declaration, and the important proceedings which were consequent thereon, the procession had been arranged with an appropriate view to the greatest possible effect; and, on leaving the Hall with his immediate friends, Stanley was yielded up to the patriots, who led him at once to his brilliant car, and raised him in triumph aloft.

For some moments, having lost the point of sight, he was somewhat unsteady; but he was soon able to reconcile himself to his exalted position, and when he had done so, the glorious pageant passed in array before him.

First came two stout well-mounted trumpeters, each of whom rejoiced in a pair of balloon cheeks, which were blown out until in the annals of cheeks nothing like them could



ever be found upon record. Then came the committee wearing scarfs and rosettes, while their horses—with their bridles and manes decorated with ribbons—were prancing and champing their bits with delight, apparently proud beyond all other animals in creation. A magnificent banner followed, with “**THORN AND LIBERTY**” thereon inscribed. Then a military band, playing up with great power and precision; then various other banners, with appropriate inscriptions, the principal bearing the arms of the town; then a line of open carriages, with the Mayor, the chief members of the corporation, and Stanley’s private friends; then another extremely powerful band; then a company of morris dancers, duly arrayed in a style the most grotesque, and performing evolutions of a character the most fantastic; then twelve blooming damsels attired in white, each bearing a basket of flowers, which they strewed with due foresight and skill.

When all these had passed in most admirable order, the triumphal car was turned, and Stanley joined the procession. It was then that he had a full view of the scene, which was indeed

on the whole most imposing. Independently of the regular inhabitants of the town, streams of gaily-dressed persons had poured in from the surrounding villages ; and while the trumpets were sounding, and the bands were playing, and the bells were ringing, and the cannon at intervals roaring in the distance ; the colours were flying, and the masses were cheering, and all seemed inspired with joy.

It is, however, necessary to mention, that this was not the end of the pageant. A vehicle, drawn by two severe-looking donkeys, immediately succeeded the car, and in front of this vehicle a machine was fixed, bearing a powerful resemblance to a gibbet, from which a well-conceived effigy of Mr. Swansdown was suspended, in a picturesque position, with a short pipe firmly established in his mouth, and his person thickly studded with crackers, while beneath him sat a gentleman, in the similitude of an unearthly personage, grinning with truly ferocious delight, and fiddling away as if he then strongly felt that he had not many minutes to live.

It may be added, as an extraordinary fact,

that Stanley did not much approve of this highly characteristic exhibition, and therefore actually intimated something like a desire to have it suppressed ; but the patriots, possessing a more exquisite taste for the sublime, and being, consequently, far more delighted with that than with any other portion of the pageant, would not hear of its suppression for one moment, and hence, having the power in their own hands then, the thing was preserved in all its pristine integrity, while the truly Satanic musician kept fiddling fit to break his heart, and thus the imposing procession moved on.

The reception Stanley met with as he passed was highly flattering. The ladies were especially delighted with his appearance, and waved their handkerchiefs in an absolute state of rapture ; he was such a remarkably fine young man, such a really charming fellow, so handsome, so graceful, so excessively elegant. In nearly every window his colours appeared, while with the crowd he was an idol, he did distribute the handfulls of half-crowns and shillings at the corner of each street with so much liberality.

These scrambles were a source of great amusement, he having learned the art of making them to great perfection from the chief of the Sons of Glory. It is true there was no mud, which was certainly unfortunate as far as it went; but there was plenty of dust, which, when duly commingled with the perspiration of the patriots, had a very good effect, and more especially as, during the whole of the morning, they had been paying their best respects to the barrels of beer which were freely established in all parts of the town.

Having passed through nearly all the principal streets, the procession reached the inn at which Amelia, and the most *distingué* ladies of the borough, had taken up their quarters. Here a splendid triumphal arch had been erected, with the trellis-work of which wreaths of ribbons and flowers had been ingeniously and effectively interwoven, while the whole was surmounted with an elegant banner, presented to Stanley by the ladies of the town.

Beneath this arch, as had been previously arranged, the car stopped; and, as Stanley was acknowledging the joyous greeting of all around,

a trumpet sounded, when the music and the cheering simultaneously ceased, and in an instant, as if by magic, a dead silence prevailed. Stanley, from whom this arrangement had been kept a strict secret, looked amazed ; but, before he had time to inquire the cause, the poor children, belonging to the various schools to which the widow had sent munificent donations in his name, and who had been stationed upon platforms on either side of the arch, commenced singing a hymn, in which the blessing of Heaven was fervently invoked on the head of their benefactor. The effect of this was electrical : all were touched deeply : the handkerchiefs of the ladies were no longer waving, and even the hardy crowd, as the strains of the children fell like heavenly music upon their ears, and thus realized their conception of a choir of angels, were awed, and hundreds of men, whom few calamities could have softened, hundreds who had been shouting, and drinking, and acting in a manner the most reckless but a moment before, were seen wiping their eyes with the sleeves of their coats, as the tears trickled into their bosoms.

Stanley was much affected : he tried to conceal it, but could not ; while Amelia wept and sobbed like a child : her heart was so full, and she felt so happy.

The moment the strains of the children had ceased, the trumpet again sounded, and again the enlivening music was heard ; and when Stanley had directed the largest coin of the realm to be given to each child, to be worn as a medal in remembrance of him, the pageant continued its course.

At length it arrived at head-quarters—the inn at which Stanley's committee had been held—when the Mayor, and the members of the corporation, alighted, and having received their representative in form, they conducted him at once to the principal room.

The crowd had not, however, seen sufficient of him yet ; albeit he had been in his perilous position for nearly two hours—and that position really was one of peril, inasmuch as the patriots by whom the car was borne had been taking a little too much strong ale—they loudly summoned him again to appear, and he eventually obeyed that summons : he appeared upon the

balcony, and the shouts with which they hailed him were tremendous. He then addressed them, and in his address thanked them for the enthusiasm they had displayed; and, having intimated to them that it was nearly three o'clock—an intimation which was well understood—he begged of them all to be merry and wise.

A circle was then formed in front of the inn, and when the wretched-looking effigy of Mr. Swansdown had been placed in the centre, the crackers with which his devoted person had been filled, were ignited, and blew him to atoms.

The patriots, bearing in mind the highly palatable intimation they had received, then repaired to the various houses of entertainment, at which enormous quantities of beef and plum-pudding had been provided; and at six o'clock Stanley sat down to dinner, with two hundred of the principal inhabitants of the town.

Here the utmost enthusiasm prevailed up to the hour of nine, when—that being the time for dancing to commence—the whole party retired from the table. Stanley opened the

ball with the lady of the Mayor, and was delighted to see his guests so joyous and happy. Here, again, he was the admiration of the whole of the ladies, and Amelia won the hearts of all the gentlemen present. Sir William danced with the widow the greater part of the evening, and nothing could exceed her delight: he was so graceful, so attentive, so kind: she was in raptures. Mr. Ripstone was absent, which she could not but think very odd; but, then, Sir William was present; and, although Mr. Ripstone was a dear, good creature, Sir William surpassed him in every point.

Having danced with spirit until twelve o'clock, Stanley, worn out with fatigue and excitement, retired with his party almost unperceived; and when the carriages were ordered, the crowd, who were waiting outside to do him honour, insisted upon drawing him themselves to his residence, which was situated nearly a mile from the town. All opposition to this was, of course, vain, and the horses were accordingly removed from both carriages, the traces and poles only remaining attached; and,

when Stanley and his party had entered, three cheers were given as the signal for starting, and off they went, preceded by a military band. Instead, however, of taking them directly home, they drew them round the town, which was brilliantly lighted up, and it was not until they imagined that their chosen representative had seen enough of the general illumination that they would consent to proceed towards his mansion.

Having once got upon the road, they were not long before they reached the gates, and here they were met by enthusiastic thousands, who, by the light of large bonfires, had been dancing on the lawn. The committee had arranged this quite unknown to Stanley, and had instructed their agents to regale the happy multitude with boiled beef and beer.

This was, of course, a fresh source of delight to Stanley, who not only encouraged the dancers to proceed, but by way of acknowledging the compliment they had paid him, took the hand of one of the lasses, and having placed her at the head of about two hundred couples, led off the next dance, *The Triumph!*

—much to the amusement of Amelia and her friends, who were enjoying the sport at the drawing-room window. This, however, settled him. The line for nearly an hour seemed interminable, for even those who had before no intention to dance, stood up, to have the honour of dancing with him. He did, however, at length, reach the bottom, when, feeling quite sure that he had had enough of it, he restored his proud partner to her friends, and left the lawn.

A signal was now given, and in an instant it was answered by a grand and unexpected flight of rockets, and as this was succeeded by a really magnificent display of fireworks of every description, it was rationally supposed that the enthusiastic guests would withdraw; but, no, nothing of the sort: although Stanley and his party retired to rest in an absolute state of exhaustion, the multitude immediately recommenced dancing, and kept it up with great spirit until the rosy morning dawned.

CHAPTER XVI.

STANLEY'S INTRODUCTION TO THE HOUSE OF
COMMONS.

BEING anxious to take his seat as soon as possible, Stanley prepared to return to town the following day. Amelia earnestly begged to be allowed to accompany him. She assured him that, notwithstanding the fatigue she had undergone, she was perfectly well able to bear the journey; and with feelings of the deepest affection portrayed the delight she should derive from merely going down to the House with him in the carriage, to see him enter for the first time that which she fondly conceived to be the theatre of his glory. Stanley, however, contended for the imprudence of such a course, and came up with Sir William alone.

Having performed the distance with g rea

expedition, they had an early dinner, and then went at once to the House. Sir William had previously explained how slight was the ceremony which had to be performed; still Stanley, as he entered, felt tremulous, and could not help wishing that the process of introduction had been over. With the exception, however, of being extremely pale, he appeared self-possessed, and after having been presented, took the oaths prescribed, and was greeted with loud cheers on taking his seat.

The House and its forms were quite new to him; he had never been previously, even as a "stranger," within its walls, and it must be confessed that his first impression was not of the most favourable character. He felt disappointed. The scene failed altogether to realise his anticipations; indeed, as he watched the preliminary proceedings, he could not but deem them in the last degree absurd. Petitions were presented, and when their titles had been proclaimed they were thrust without any further ceremony under the table. Bills were read for the third time, nominally—bills of great importance, affecting the interests of

millions—and passed as if they were valueless ; for they were utterly disregarded by the members generally, who appeared to be determined to uphold the reputation of the House as a deliberative assembly, by deliberating in knots upon matters of a purely private nature.

“ Order !—order !” exclaimed the Speaker, whenever the buzz became in his judgment rather too loud, and as a matter of courtesy on all such occasions it was for a moment subdued, but it swelled again gradually until it resembled that murmur which floats upon the air of a well-conducted national school, when the Speaker again cried “ Order !—order !” in a tone of great beauty and depth.

“ Well,” said Sir William, who sat next to Stanley, “ how do you feel in your new position ?”

“ Disappointed,” replied Stanley.

“ Why, what did you expect ?”

“ More dignity, more solemnity, more attention on the part of the members instead of this levity and noise. It seems to me to be rather an odd way of conducting the business of the nation.”

Sir William smiled, and having observed that the business had not yet commenced in reality, told him to suspend his judgment until after the debate.

When the third reading of bills, the presentation of petitions, and a variety of other little unimportant matters had been disposed of, an honourable member rose to open a subject which led to a long and animated discussion, during which an immense amount of bitterness was displayed and applauded far more loudly than anything which absolutely bore upon the question at issue.

To Stanley it appeared that senators and actors were equally enamoured of applause ; that the vilest characteristics of both were strengthened and confirmed by the cheers which they elicited ; and that as upon the stage, rant and most unnatural acting were certain to strike those who had the strongest lungs, so in the House, personalities and senseless rancour, so perfectly did they meet party views, were hailed with rapture by the superficial satellites of faction, to the utter discouragement of natural

eloquence, useful discussion, and sound, sober sense.

Of course Stanley never intended to be a silent member ; he had resolved from the first to make himself conspicuous by taking an active part in the debates, in the full conviction that by getting well up in his subjects, he must of necessity succeed, and that signally, seeing that he intended to introduce a new style of eloquence which would be at once natural, forcible and suasive. The debate of that evening instead of shaking this high resolution had the direct effect of rendering it more firm ; it excited his ambition in a greater degree than ever : he had no apprehension, he saw nothing to fear : he thought of nothing—dreamt of nothing, but speaking. He had the highest possible confidence in his own oratorical powers ; he felt that he had the game in his own hands, and being then in a position to distinguish himself, he determined on making the most of that position ; to study deeply, and to prepare to take the country by storm.

In the mean time, those whom he had left with his honoured constituents to settle the

expenses of his election, were favoured from morning till night with demands of the most ingenious and extraordinary character. Butchers, bakers, drapers, poulterers, tailors, ironmongers, haberdashers, blacksmiths, weavers, farriers, saddlers, tallow-chandlers, fruiterers, post-masters, printers; in short, bills were hourly lavished upon them by respectable members of almost every trade, and the honour which under those peculiar circumstances actuates tradesmen in the aggregate, is, in general, not only conspicuous, but amazing.

The victuallers, however, were collectively the most aristocratic in their claims. Each assumed that he had a *carte blanche*, and felt strongly that in justice to himself, he ought, in filling it up, to have the highest regard to his own interest. The quantity of beer stated to have been consumed exceeded by several thousand gallons the entire stock of the town; and had the charges for spirituous liquors been submitted to the exciseman, it would have tended to convince him that both smuggling and private distillation had been carried on to an alarming extent under his very nose.

As many of the claims sent in were of a palpably gross and flagrant character, the chairman of the committee—notwithstanding the widow's desire that all demands should be satisfied—resisted them on the ground of their being monstrous. He was willing to satisfy all just claims; he was willing to meet the demands, however exorbitant, of all who had the slightest foundation to rest their demands upon; but he refused to pay those who could have rendered no service, and by whom nothing could have been supplied.

The immediate consequence of this refusal was a meeting of the malcontents, at which it was unanimously resolved that such resistance to those undoubted rights and privileges, which they and their forefathers generally had enjoyed by prescription from time immemorial, was unconstitutional and rotten: that the claims they had sent in were customary, and therefore correct; and that from these premises, it resulted that they were bound, in strict justice to their wives and families, to call into action all the energies of which they were capable for the legitimate purpose of “trying it on.”

Having carried this strong resolution *nemine contradicente*, they had glasses round with the view of polishing their brass, and then proceeded in a body to enforce their claims.

On entering the room in which the chairman of the committee and his secretary were on the point of winding up the affairs, Mr. Bouncewell—who, being a highly respectable man in his way, had been appointed spokesman general on this occasion—said, with the air of a man conscious of the purity of his motives,

“We’ve come agin’ about them there little accounts of ourn : question is, do you mean to settle ’em, or don’t you?”

His colleagues, by whom he was backed, highly approved of this question, and winked and nodded with the view of intimating to each other that in their judgment that was the point.

“Gentlemen,” said the chairman, with great calmness, in reply, “I must say that I am somewhat astonished, after what transpired when you did me the honour—”

“We don’t want no flummery here,” said Mr. Bouncewell, with very great impatience.

“We didn’t come here to have any long speeches ; we ain’t to be done in that there way ; we came here expressly to give you another chance of settling them there little bills without any more bother, so all you’ve got to do is to say in a word, you know, whether you’ll pay us or not.”

“If I thought for a moment that your demands were just, gentlemen, I would do so without hesitation ; but as I feel quite certain that you have no real claim, I must beg, as before, to decline.”

“Then we’ll law you !” exclaimed Mr. Bouncewell ; and his friends with an expression of ferocity cried, “Ay ! and you shall have lots on it !”

“The law is open to you, gentlemen,” rejoined the chairman, with great suavity ; “you must use your own discretion.”

“We’ll smother you with actions, sir !” cried Mr. Bouncewell. “We ain’t a-going to be robbed, don’t suppose it ! Do you think you’ve got hold of a pack of fools ? Do you think we’re a-going to give away our substance for nothing ? If you do you was never

in your life more mistaken. A pretty thing, indeed!" he added, turning to his companions, who pouted and frowned with due significance, "a very pretty thing! Here! a lot of respectable tradesmen, here, swindled out of their substance, and then can't get paid! Did you ever in your born days hear of such a thing!"

"Shame!—Shame!" cried his colleagues, with deep indignation, for they felt altogether disgusted. "It's scandalous!—that it is—scandalous!"

"You may think so, gentlemen," said the chairman, with a politeness which was really very provoking; "but upon my honour I cannot agree with you."

"You can't?" said Mr. Bouncewell, sarcastically. "You see nothing shameful in plundering industrious, honest, hard-working tradesmen,—eh, don't you? But what's the use of talking! You don't mean to settle with us?—that's to be understood?"

"Certainly."

"Then I'll tell you what it is: we'll blow up the whole affair! We'll serve you out in that

way. The other side wants information—we'll give it!—we'll tell all we know!"

"We just will!" cried his friends.

"We'll come forward as witnesses. We know quite enough to upset the election! We'll learn you how to be shabby! Do you think that'll answer your purpose?"

"Gentlemen," said the chairman, "you will pursue that course which you deem most correct. I have only to repeat that I cannot, and will not entertain your claims."

Mr. Bouncewell then started a groan, which his associates responded to deeply; and when this had been accomplished to their entire satisfaction, each gave full expression to his sentiments on the subject, and with a look of ineffable contempt left the room.

As this was the last application, the accounts were immediately closed, and as everything had been charged extremely reasonable considering, the sum total amounted to thirty thousand pounds.

This, however, utterly failed to alarm the widow. She would not suffer herself to think

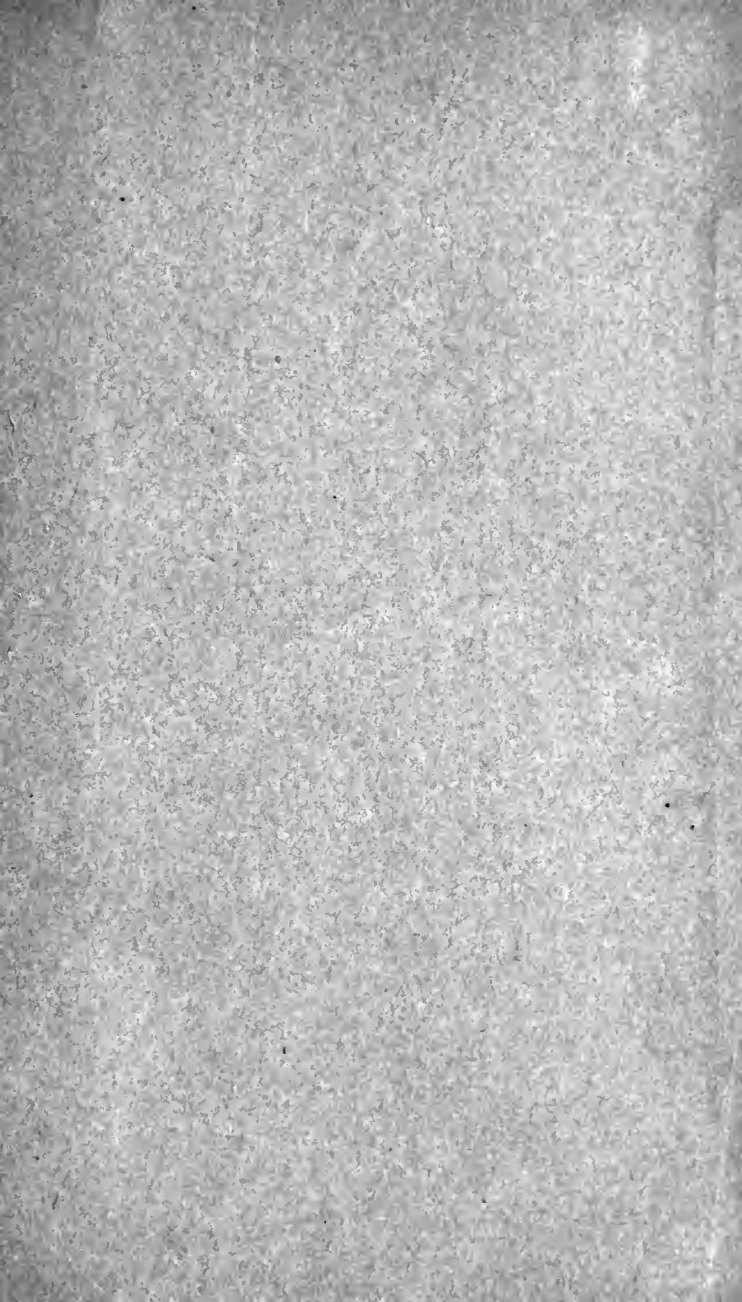
of the largeness of the sum. It was sufficient for her to feel that it had all been expended for the purpose of raising her Stanley to distinction ; and to achieve that object she could have borne to be reduced to comparative beggary herself. It was therefore with unalloyed pleasure that, when all had been arranged, she bade adieu to that place of which her Stanley was then the representative in parliament, albeit she knew that Swansdown and his agents were still displaying the utmost zeal.

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